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Once again, I'm not sending Christmas cards

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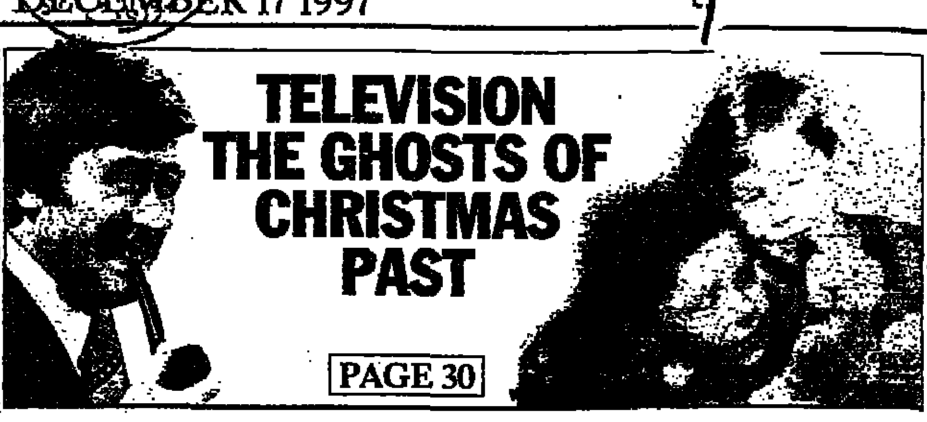

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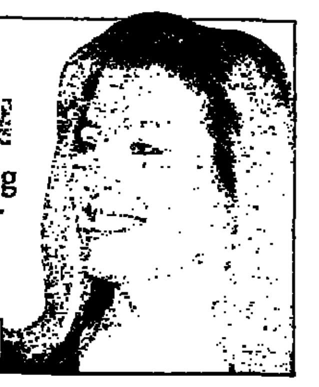

ALAN COREN

My wedding present for Ffion

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Suspended Glasgow Labour MP accused of election fraud

Sarwar: in court today

By Shirley English and Jill Sherman

A WARRANT for the arrest of Mohammed Sarwar, the suspended Labour MP for Glasgow Govan, was issued last night on charges of election fraud.

Mr Sarwar, 44, the millionaire businessman who became Britain's first Muslim MP on May 1, was due to appear voluntarily today at Glasgow Sheriff Court.

The Crown Office said he was facing criminal charges relating to the late registration of voters, attempting to pervert the course of justice and contraventions of the Representation of the People Act in connection with election expenses.

Mr Sarwar was interviewed by Strathclyde police last week after a seven-month inquiry. He had hoped to make his maiden speech in the House of Commons this Friday. Last night he was in Glasgow and was said to be "aware" that he was going to be charged.

He triggered the Government's first sleaze crisis in May when he was suspended by the Labour Party amid allegations published by the *News of the World* that he had offered a £5,000 bribe to Badar Islam, an election rival, to scale down his campaign. Mr Sarwar claimed the money was a loan. Later other allegations emerged concerning expenses fiddles and attempts to rig the election register. Throughout, although isolated, Mr Sarwar maintained his innocence and promised to clear his name.

The scale of the charges against Mr Sarwar and their associations with sleaze will be embarrassing for Tony Blair, who has always made clear that he would not tolerate financial scandal in his party. Two other MPs have already been suspended from the parliamentary party this year. Bob Wareing, Labour MP for Liverpool West Derby, was suspended in June for failing to declare financial interests with a Serbian company. He has since been reinstated.

In August Tommy Graham, the MP for West Renfrewshire who was named in the suicide note of Gordon McMaster in which he was accused of orchestrating a whispering campaign against the late MP, was suspended because he brought the party into disrepute by publicly criticising colleagues. He was cleared of any link with the suicide.

Conservative MPs were seeking to clarify last night whether Mr Sarwar would be allowed permission to enter the House of Commons while the legal proceedings were continuing. He was seen in the Commons late last week but has not attended regularly since his suspension.

David Maclean, the former Tory minister, raised a point of order in the Commons in which he said the warrant issued was for "one of the most grave charges which exists" for an MP.

Yesterday Margaret Curran, Mr Sarwar's election agent, refused to comment and was referring all calls to Labour Party headquarters. In a prepared statement, a Labour spokesman said: "When the police inquiries began the Labour Party took action in two ways. Sarwar was suspended from membership of the Parliamentary Labour Party and the Labour Party deprived him of the right to represent the party at any level. We made it clear that this action was pending the outcome of the inquiry. Now that Mr Sarwar has been charged he will continue to be suspended."

Mike Russell, chief executive of the Scottish National Party, called on Mr Sarwar to resign "in the interests of democracy and the representation of the people of Govan." He said that a by-election offering constituents the chance to choose again was the only realistic option and should be taken either voluntarily by Mr Sarwar or at the behest of the Labour Party. The SNP gave Labour a close fight in Govan on May 1.

Mr Russell said: "Clearly Mr Sarwar will now have the opportunity to clear his name in court, but having an MP disabled by allegations since May 1, Govan now has an MP likely to be disabled by fighting criminal charges in court for a lengthy period of time."

Smuggled art clampdown by Sotheby's

By Dalya Alberge and Daniel McGrory

SOTHEBY'S is to tighten up its sale procedures to make sure they are "clean as a whistle" after an inquiry into allegations that it was involved in smuggling art treasures. The auction house also said that it would not handle anything if there was any suspicion that it might have been looted abroad.

The new code of conduct was announced at an emergency staff meeting last night at the end of an $11 million investigation set up after *The Times* and an undercover team from *Channel 4* reported that staff had been rigging auctions and illegally exporting works of art.

The inquiry found up to 20 cases in which Sotheby's staff may have broken a country's laws, but no one has been disciplined. A director suspended in February has been reinstated.

Dede Brooks, Sotheby's chief executive, denied that the report was a whitewash and said: "It's been a very painful process. Our changes are not a reflection of anything we found wrong, but more making certain that everything is clean as a whistle."

She said the report's findings would remain confidential, but admitted to a number of shortcomings in the company's operations — including staff training and record-keeping, which she described as absolutely inadequate.

The inquiry began after *Roeland Kollewijn*, Sotheby's Old Masters expert in Milan, was filmed arranging to smuggle an 18th century portrait to London. Within days, Kollewijn had resigned and George Gordon, a senior director of the London Old Masters department, was suspended. He has now been reinstated.

Mrs Brooks insisted yesterday that the Kollewijn affair was an isolated case, although the inquiry did find evidence of wrongdoing by "a handful of staff". Sotheby's refused to say how many or name the works of art involved.

The inquiry — carried out by two law firms from New York and London under the chairmanship of the Sotheby's non-executive director Max Fisher — examined 8,000 transactions representing almost all of the past year's sales of Old Master paintings, jewellery and antiquities with cross-border issues. It also took advice from 45 outside experts and interviewed more than 200 staff in confidence.

Feb 6: art scandal was revealed in The Times

Kollewijn is facing legal procedures in Italy and did not give evidence; nor did Peter Watson, whose book launched the undercover investigation. He said that he was surprised not to have been invited to give evidence, but Sotheby's said it had made strenuous efforts to persuade him to speak. Mrs Brooks said: "As much as I hate to admit it, I think he did us a service. He jump-started the process."

Henry King, senior partner with the New York firm Davis Polk & Wardwell, said that they had found evidence of "some deviation" from the company's policy that employees *should not break* any country's laws in "less than 20 cases". He was satisfied that individuals had acted from ignorance and said no one should be sacked.

Mrs Brooks said that the new code of practice meant the company had already turned away up to £10 million of business, including pre-Columbian artefacts and Old Master paintings. But that was balanced by the chance to restore Sotheby's credibility.

"The dramatic change is that if any employee has actual knowledge that a work has been illegally exported from any country — not just those that we do business with — then, regardless of US or EC law, we will not sell it. We are the only auction business to state this." Sotheby's has also introduced a more detailed warranty on contracts in which the owner states that the property was legally exported and imported.

The move was welcomed by critics of auction house practices, including Sir Hugh Leggatt, the former museums and galleries commissioner, who described it as a great step forward that should have been introduced years ago.

Neil Brodie, co-ordinator of the illicit antiquities research centre at the McDonald Institute for Archaeological Research at Cambridge, said: "I would like to hope other auction houses and dealers would follow their example."

Smuggling dossier, page 8

GILL ALLEN

Dede Brooks, Sotheby's chief executive, yesterday: "It's been a very painful process"

Avian flu may be spreading among humans

By Jonathan Mirsky in Hong Kong and Nigel Hawkes

CHICKEN FLU, which has killed two people, may be spreading from person to person, health authorities in Hong Kong believe.

If so, the danger of a worldwide epidemic will be greatly increased. Until now it had been thought all 11 cases of the disease so far identified or suspected had caught it directly from birds. But yesterday Dr Margaret Chan, Hong Kong's Director of Health, disclosed that two children, cousins of a five-year-old girl with avian flu, had the disease. Tests were being done to prove the link "beyond all doubt".

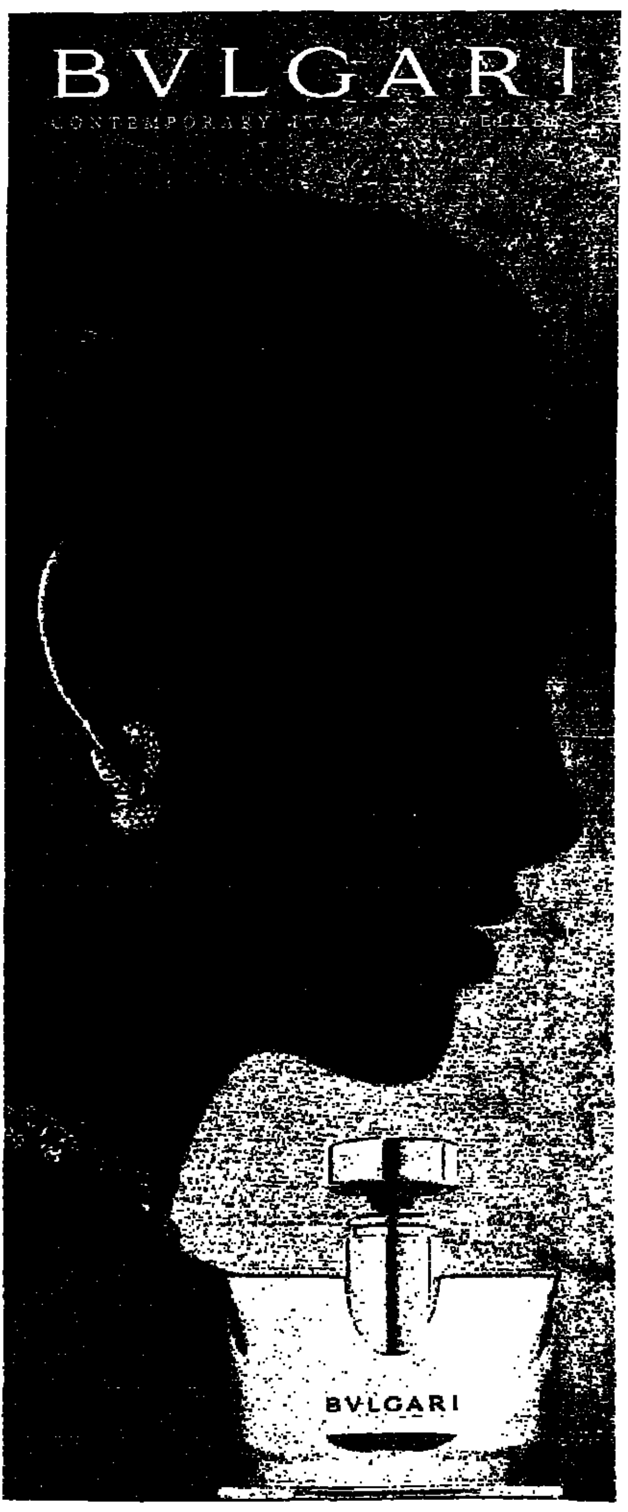
While "such man-to-man transmission is occurring at a very low level," she said, "we are nevertheless concerned by the constellation of cases. We need to expand our surveillance of the source of transmission and whether the virus has undergone any genetic changes or is still pure bird virus."

On Monday, Dr Robert Webster, of the World Health Organisation's flu team, and an expert at St Jude's Children's Research Hospital in Memphis, Tennessee, said it was only a matter of time before person-to-person infection began. When that happened, he said, the virus could rage around the globe and existing flu vaccines would offer no protection.

The WHO said it would send testing kits for avian flu to 110 centres in 82 countries around the world, to try to identify any cases outside Hong Kong, which would almost certainly be conclusive proof of a person-to-person spread.

The virus, which is called H5N1, has been known for many years, and had only been found in birds until May this year, when the first human victim, a three-year-old boy, died after infection with a virus which tests showed to be identical.

This is the first time that any flu virus has jumped directly from birds to humans. Most new strains of flu develop in pigs and are then passed to humans.



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Freezing snow is blown in from East

By Damian Whitworth

BITTER winds from the Russian Steppes will keep temperatures below freezing across Britain, with snow in many places today. The Meteorological Office said that driving conditions could be hazardous and rail journeys disrupted.

Last night temperatures were a degree or so either side of freezing throughout the country and they are expected to stay much the same today. "But the wind-chill factor will make it feel 10 to 15 degrees colder. If anything the winds will be a touch stronger than they have been already during this cold snap," a Meteorological Office spokesman said.

A band of snow was expected to sweep across the South and West last night, reaching the Thames Valley by dawn, but as it moves north it is likely to become cold rain. "There will be fairly significant problems on the roads and rail," the spokesman said.

"However, the milder air which has been keeping temperatures up throughout the autumn and beginning of the winter will once again come in from the West, bringing the temperatures slowly up by Thursday in the South and everywhere else by Friday." The longer-term outlook was for that milder weather to be sustained, although he did not rule out another cold snap.

Help the Aged called for the wind-chill factor to be taken into account when calculating cold weather payments for the elderly. The bookmaker Coral cut the odds on a second successive white Christmas from 4-1 to 7-2 after yesterday's flurries inspired bets totalling more than £10,000.

Homeless die, page 14
Forecast, page 22

"The great thing is that they're all volunteers"

Beef rebels warn Government

The Government dismissed predictions of mass civil disobedience by meat traders after it faced a backlash at home and in Europe over its ban on the sale of beef on the bone and on European imports that did not match British standards. Butchers face prosecution and jail sentences

Pages 3, 19

Gang trio jailed for attack on witness

By Lin Jenkins and Peter Foster

THREE youths who tried to "terrify and intimidate" the key witness in the Philip Lawrence murder trial were jailed yesterday.

They were sentenced at the end of the last trial in a series involving one gang that was responsible for violent crimes in London, including the stabbing of Mr Lawrence outside the school where he was headmaster, the gang rape of a tourist and the near-fatal stabbing of the husband of Dame Barbara Mills, the Director of Public Prosecutions.

Gregory Jananto, Ramon Quiambo and Roland Ramos, all 18, were convicted of attempting to pervert the course of justice, a crime the judge described as a "growing scourge". Jananto was jailed for seven years and the other two for six.

The attack on Antony Garcia, 20, occurred as he left a birthday party in a Charing Cross Road club the night before he gave evidence that Learco Chindamo had confessed over a game of pool that he had murdered Mr Lawrence. Mr Recorder David Farrer, QC, said that the attack had been planned and that the 200 mainly Filipino partygoers must have known about the campaign of intimidation. "I do not believe this was a spontaneous action. I think it was something which, at the least, a large number of people talked about and agreed upon."

He praised Mr Garcia, whose ear was cut with a bottle before he was rescued by police, saying: "Antony Garcia is a young man who has shown conspicuous courage over a long period of time."

Street warriors, page 7

Thus saith Prophet John ... and saith and saith and saith

MATTHEW PARRIS

POLITICAL SKETCH

John Prescott would have made a marvellous Old Testament prophet.

"Madam Speaker, man-made climate change *is the greatest environmental* threat facing the world *today*.

"In the UK we have been suffering record drought for the last two and a half years. This year the world experienced the highest average temperatures ever recorded.

"Terrible floods have engulfed central Europe. Droughts and storms have followed from this year's El Niño. Forest fires have caused deadly pollution in South *East Asia and Australia. Our polar.* icecaps are melting.

"*And only this* weekend Mexico was hit by freak snowstorms. Already our sea levels are rising . . .

"*It this continues, some island* communities will disappear into the sea . . .

"Whole swaths of Britain's east coast could fall victim to rising sea levels. Man risks playing havoc with the world's weather systems.

"Unless we act now, we will be condemning out children to a world of drought and crop failures, mass migration and spreading disease."

On and on the Deputy Prime Minister raged, his face black as thunder, *his voice resonant* with impending catastrophe.

Such was *Mr Prescott's alarm* that his text swam before his eyes as he warned in horrified tones of the threat from "greenhouse grass emissions".

Then he told us what he was going to do about it — what, indeed, he had already done. Britain had played "a major role" at the Kyoto conference.

"I myself chaired the meeting of developed countries," he said. "I met *the leaders of a number of developed* and developing countries." And, no doubt partly as a result, there was now "a window of credibility".

We had not (before he mentioned it) pictured Mr Prescott as a window of credibility. More a catflap of inanity. True, he meets a wall of incredulity. Sometimes he seems on the threshhold of insanity.

More rarely there is a peephole of rationality. His efforts are sprayed with the pebbledash of vanity. We paint his performances with a gloss *of levity. And over the rest of his* speech we draw the curtain of modesty.

Except that, such was the power of his delivery, such the insistence with *which he promised* concerted world action against global warming, that by the time the Deputy Prime Minister sat down we began to fear lest Mr Prescott not only saved the world, but went too far.

Now he had travelled to Kyoto, it seemed, Planet Earth would unite to stop sea-levels rising. Another performance like this and Prescott looks in danger of causing them to fall. Could he provoke a reduction too far in carbon dioxide levels?

The Deputy Prime Minister must *be stopped from attending any more* international conferences lest the ocean begin rolling back like the Red Sea.

Another five years of John Prescott, and *Essex will become* an inland plateau, Liverpool a hillside and all our docks dry ruins, many miles from the shrunken seas.

"Failure," roared the Prophet John, as he neared the termination of his speech, "would have condemned future generations to untold misery and disaster.

"We have taken the first, but only the first, crucial step to curbing climate change. There is still much to be done."

Stop, Mr Prescott! Stop before you crash through the window of credibility *and tumble into the moat of* prolixity! Stop before you stick fast in the *mud* of loquacity! *Stop* before we all drown in the waters of fatuity!

Watchdog to check minister's contacts with trust

By Jill Sherman
Chief Political Correspondent

SIR GORDON DOWNEY, the parliamentary watchdog, has been formally asked to investigate Geoffrey Robinson's financial affairs and to look "in confidence" at details of the Orion Trust.

Peter Lilley, the Shadow Chancellor has written to Sir Gordon to complain formally about the failure to register the Paymaster General's involvement in an offshore trust with the Register of Members' Interests. Sir Gordon has already indicated that he will investigate Mr Robinson's affairs following such a complaint.

Mr Lilley has also asked Sir Gordon to rule on "an apparent conflict of interest" between Mr Robinson's ministerial role and the trust.

Last night a spokesman for *Mr Robinson* said the Paymaster General was "more than happy for Sir Gordon to look into this and will of course comply with any decision that he makes". The spokesman said that if Sir Gordon *ruled that he should* register the trust then he would do so, but this would mean that Tory MPs would have to do the same.

Sources close to Mr Robinson said they thought it unlikely that he would be asked to reveal details about the trust deed.

Sir Gordon said yesterday *that Mr Lilley wrote to him* eight days ago, raising a question about the registration of offshore trusts. He replied that he would look into the issue if a complaint was lodged. But he said that the question of a potential conflict of interest between Mr *Robinson's relations with the* trust and his ministerial responsibilities was a matter for the Prime Minister.

Mr Lilley said in his letter yesterday that statements by Mr Robinson and his solicitors plus interviews with three newspapers revealed that he *and his family were the discretionary* beneficiaries of the Orion Trust — *the owner of* 13 million shares in a company founded by Mr Robinson.

The Shadow Chancellor also highlights Mr Robinson's confirmation that he suggested the trust buy his rights to 10 million TransTec shares *and shares in Coventry City* Football Club. "All this indicates a close involvement with the trust and, through it, with his commercial interests." Mr Lilley says in the letter.

He added: "I understand that not all trusts have such a close link with their beneficiaries. *But, where they do, they* surely fall within the rule *requiring disclosure?*"

Butchers defy beef ban amid backlash

By Philip Webster, Political Editor, and Adrian Lee

THE Government dismissed predictions of mass civil disobedience by meat traders yesterday after it faced a backlash at home and in *Europe over its ban on the sale* of beef on the bone and on European imports that did not match British standards.

After warnings that the new bone ban was "unenforceable" just hours after it came into effect, senior officials said that butchers were law-abiding citizens *and would comply* with the new regulations which would soon "settle down".

But throughout Britain yesterday they continued to sell beef on the bone. They were warned that they faced prosecution and possible jail sentences.

"*If they lay down the gauntlet* it is just a question of time *before someone is brought* before the courts," a leading enforcement officer said.

The row took an angry political turn when Jack Cunningham, the Agriculture Minister, accused William Hague of "breathtaking hypocrisy" for backtracking on *his earlier support for the* measure. The Tory leader backed opponents of the ban during a dawn tour of Smithfield, London's meat market. He accused the Government of "insufferable arrogance" by introducing the ban and failing to maintain support levels *for the farming* industry still reeling from the BSE crisis and the effects of the strong pound which had hit exports.

But Dr Cunningham responded by accusing Mr Hague of "hypocrisy so blatant it is breathtaking". The *minister said Mr Hague had* expressed support for the ban *on the basis of advice from* scientists, but was now prepared to play "fast and loose" with public health to score political points.

Sources close to the minister *have insisted that he had no* choice but to impose the ban because he was acting on scientific advice.

Dr Kenneth Calman, the Government's chief medical officer, is understood to have told Dr Cunningham both before and after the advice *from the Government's scientific* committee arrived that *there should be no question of* allowing infected meat in th human food chain. "No responsible minister could have done anything else," said informed Government sources.

Last night Dr Cunningham *rejected the criticisms of the* regulations. In a statement issued after his return from Brussels he insisted it would be obvious to inspectors and customers if meat was being sold on the bone. "Environmental health officers visit butchers as part of their day-to-day *enforcement duties,*" he said.

Meanwhile in Brussels Agriculture Commissioner Franz Fischler told a news conference that the legality of the move was still being investigated and warned it could breach EU rules.

However, despite calls from MEPs for immediate legal *action, Britain could be saved* from prosecution because it will be difficult to squeeze a case through the European Courts of Justice before the measures take effect across Europe in three months' time.

In the Isle of Man and Jersey, which have their own *Parliaments, the sale of T-*bone steak, oxtail, and rib will be allowed.

MARTIN BEDDALL

William Hague showing his opposition to the ban by tucking into steak and Guinness at the Cock Tavern, Smithfield, yesterday morning

Germany criticises curbs on imports

From Charles Bremner
in Brussels

BRITAIN'S decision to impose tough anti-BSE rules on imported beef ran into opposition yesterday from Germany and other EU states yester*day, but the European Commission* indicated that it was unlikely to act against London over the *measures*.

EU farm ministers told Jack Cunningham, the Agriculture Minister, that they were unhappy with Britain's move to require the removal of bone and offal from the meat, according to Fernand Boden, the Luxembourg *minister who chaired the Brussels* session. "You shouldn't go it alone *when it comes to matters of* public health. A unilateral decision is not something that will restore consumer confidence," he said.

The strongest criticism came from Germany, which claims it has no native BSE and is resisting EU moves to impose the new hygiene rules on all *member states. Jochen Borchert, its* minister, said the British move was "legally unjustifiable". The EU rules that allowed states to take unilateral action did not apply in this case because they could only be invoked over a sudden emergency and there was none in this case.

Franz Fischler, the Farm Commis*sioner, said Brussels could only form* an opinion once it saw a text of Britain's decision. Under EU law, a unilateral import restriction could be illegal. Britain is arguing that its measures are not an import ban, but a requirement imposed on beef at the point of sale.

Herr Fischler confirmed that there was nothing illegal in Britain's ban on *the sale of meat-on-the bone. Officials* indicated that even if Britain was considered to be breaking the letter of the single market rules, legal action would be unlikely. This was because the Commission has itself been pressing for the EU-wide removal of BSE "risk materials" and any case at the European court would not be heard *until after the likely implementation of* the new EU rules. The picture was *complicated* because Ireland and France had already imposed their own hygiene requirements, although these did not include bans on meat-on-the-bone. However a Commission spokesman said: "We urge the British authorities not to do anything illegal."

The deadline was delayed from next *January 1 to April 1 in a vote by the 14* other member states on Monday, the move that triggered Dr Cunningham's decision. The British minister played down differences with the EU yesterday, saying: "The atmosphere was good. We had a long amicable discussion . . . no one is falling out."

Dr Cunningham said that France and Ireland *had already* imposed similar rules and been subject to no action by the *Commission*.

Straw tells police to cut pensions bill

By Stewart Tendler, Crime Correspondent

JACK STRAW *yesterday* ordered police forces to reduce early *retirement* on medical grounds after a report suggested that officers were being allowed to take sickness pensions.

The report by the Inspectorate of Constabulary proposes that forces should set up resettlement *schemes* so that officers can be helped to find civilian jobs. The system could be modelled on the redundancy *schemes used in the Services and the officers* could receive a bonus to go.

Endorsing a call by the report for the average rate of medical retirements to fall from 45 per cent to 33 per cent within two years, Jack Straw *said forces must take* urgent action. He said there was no excuse for ill-health pensions to vary from 77 per cent of all retirements in Merseyside to 16 per cent in Wiltshire.

More than 50 per cent of officers *retiring in* a third of all the 43 *forces in England and* Wales leave on medical grounds, which brings extra pension payments. Mr Straw said the report showed that many forces were not tackling sickness problems effectively.

The report reveals that in 1996-97 more than 1.5 million police working days were lost at a cost of £210 million across England and Wales. On any day 6,600 officers are reported sick, equal to the entire police coverage of Wales. The report indicates *there are a significant* number of officers exploiting the pension system.An officer who left at the age of 51 after 27 years' service would get £279,500 by the time he was 70, but the *pension would* not be *index* linked until he was 55. If he could get an ill-health pension, it would be index-linked at once and would be worth £328,900 by 70. If he claims a minor injury award as well the *total* would be £505,600.

Blair acts to protect press freedom

By Philip Webster
Political Editor

TONY BLAIR told senior ministers yesterday that two key government Bills should not be allowed to become backdoor privacy laws.

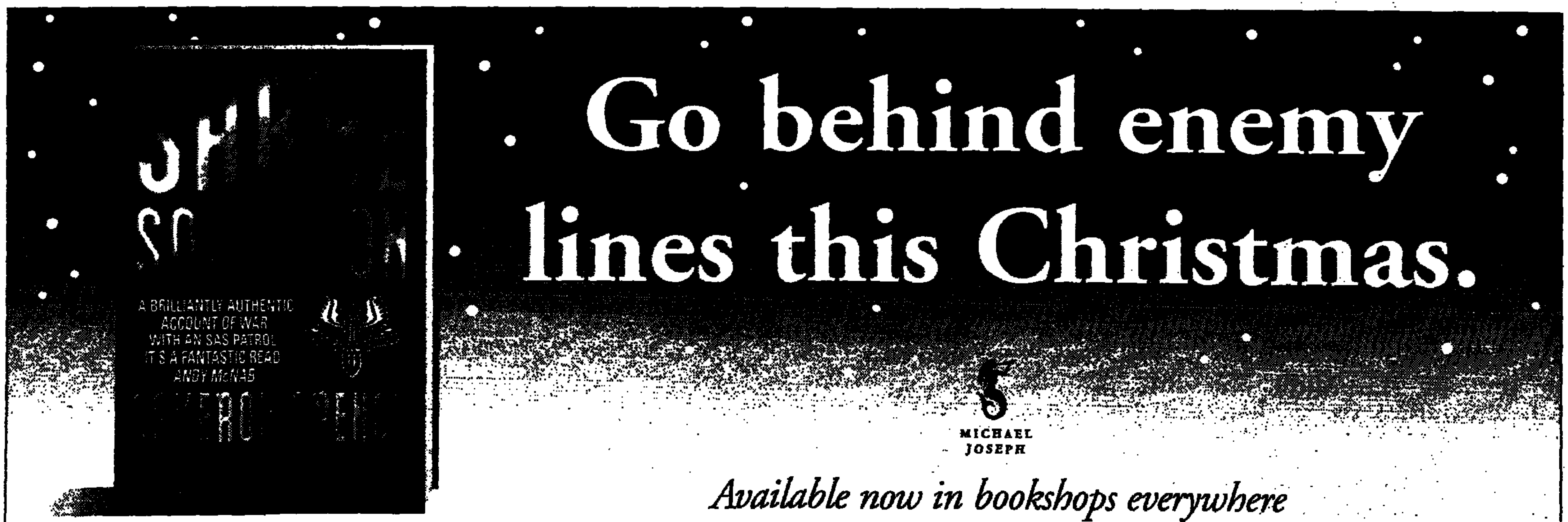
The Prime Minister chaired a *meeting of ministers* at Downing Street at which he *sought* reassurance that both the new Data Protection Bill and the Human Rights Bill, incorporating the European convention into British law, would not damage press freedom. *The Government* has already decided that the data *Bill should include changes to* stop it being used to block investigative journalism.

After talks between Jack Straw, the Home Secretary, and Lord Wakeham, chairman of the Press Complaints Commission, the Government has come down against "prior *restraint*" — *the principle of* allowing people to seek protection against alleged breaches before publication of an article or broadcast. Mr Blair is said by Cabinet colleagues to be taking a close personal interest in the passage of both Bills.

He has been briefed personally by Mr Straw and Lord Irvine of Lairg, the Lord Chancellor, who is in charge of the Human Rights Bill.

The Prime Minister has always been against privacy laws and in favour of press self-regulation and ministers *say that he is now looking at* both measures with a lawyer's eye. The data Bill, expected last week or this, is now expected to be delayed until the new year so that "loose ends" can be tied up. There will be continuing discussions *following the meeting on* changes that might be needed *to the human rights* Bill.

Lord Irvine admitted recently that the law might damage freedom of the press and interfere with the judgments of the PCC. He has said that the PCC might be considered a *public body under the convention*. As a result its ruling would be open to court challenge and newspapers would be subject to interim injunctions.



Formula One team acquitted of Senna death charges

Frank Williams: relief

FROM RICHARD OWEN IN ROME

FRANK WILLIAMS and two other senior members of the Williams Formula One management were *yesterday acquitted* on charges of manslaughter arising from the death three years ago of the Brazilian motor-racing champion Ayrton Senna.

The decision by a district court at Imola, near Bologna, northern Italy, not far from the racetrack where Senna died on 1st May, 1994, was greeted with huge relief in the world of formula one racing.

Italian motor racing officials said that if Mr Williams had been convicted, the future of Formula One in Italy would have been under threat.

Patrick Head, the Williams technical director, and Adrian Newey, the former chief designer, were also cleared.

The prosecution said that it may appeal against the acquittals.

Maurizio Passarini, the public prosecutor, had argued that modifications to the steering wheel of *Senna's car made before the Imola* Grand Prix had caused it to snap.

The steering column pierced Senna's helmet and killed him instantly as the racing car hit the concrete wall of the track at 190mph. Mr Williams, who was paralysed in a car accident 11 years ago, appeared in a wheelchair at the Imola hearings at the end of October, and admitted that he had had "some doubts" about the steering wheel modifications, which were designed to give Senna more room behind the wheel.

But he said that he did not believe this was the cause of the accident, *and insisted that the car's* "engineering and integrity" were normal.

After the acquittal, Peter Goodman, one of the lawyers representing Mr Williams, said: "This is the right verdict. The trial was conducted correctly. Mr Williams will be pleased that it is over and has gone successfully for him."

Signor *Passarini last month* accepted that there was no material case against Mr Williams, and recommended that the charge against him be dropped.

But he called for both Mr Head and Mr Newey to be convicted and given a one-year suspended sentence each.

A Williams spokesman said that the team now looked forward to next year's season "with confidence and enthusiasm". Ken Tyrrell, of Formula One, said that the court decision was "tremendous" news.

"The fact that Frank and the rest of the team have coped with this *major problem during* a championship year says something about them," Mr Tyrrell said.

He added that the FIA, the governing body of motor-racing, should have dealt with the matter, rather than it going before an Italian court of law.

Eddie Jordan, the Formula One team boss, said it would be difficult for him to send "a lot of engineers and designers who in their opinion have built the best and safest car they can" to take part in a race in Italy which might end with them facing criminal charges in the event of an accident.

"In the very unlikely event of a driver fatality you could have an engineer or a team owner going to jail while their family thinks they are just pursuing their sport," Mr Jordan said.

The governing body said it would not comment on the verdict until it had studied the court's decision fully.

Three track officials who had been charged were also acquitted.

Diary spoof hurt Clark's colossal vanity, says QC

BY EMMA WILKINS

ALAN CLARK'S "colossal vanity" caused him to complain when a series of spoof journals appeared under his name in a newspaper, the High Court was told yesterday.

The Conservative MP and diarist, who is seeking damages and an injunction preventing the *Evening Standard* from further publication of "Alan Clark's Secret Political Diary", took his action to stamp out ridicule he richly deserved, it was claimed.

Mr Clark, a self-confessed philanderer, acknowledged that he was a fair target for satire on his sexual outlook. But he was "deeply offended" by the characterisation of his political views as akin to those of the Nazis, the court was told.

Mr Clark, who has written several military histories as well as his bestselling *Diaries* published in 1993, claims his reputation as a "serious man of letters" was damaged by the spoofs, which were written by Peter Bradshaw, a journalist. While Mr Bradshaw's name appears in bold print at the top of each diary, Mr Clark's name and photograph are prominently displayed.

Peter Prescott, QC, for the *Standard*, asked: "Are you indeed asserting, with all the gravitas becoming a witness giving evidence in a court of law, *that these spoofs will* damage your reputation as a serious man of letters?"

"Yes," replied Mr Clark.

"And as a serious historian?"

"Yes".

Mr Clark added: "A huge *number of people have* complained to me that they were upset — not just misled — upset by what 'I' wrote." He said that twice on the phone he asked Mr Bradshaw to stop writing the pieces and was referred to the *Standard*'s Editor, Max Hastings. In May he complained to Mr Hastings when they met at the Chelsea Flower Show. Mr Hastings said that the series would continue as it was "the most popular thing in the paper".

The 65-year-old MP said: "I am concerned that there are many members of the public of whom I am unaware who will also have believed that I had written the articles and who were offended by the contents, and whose misapprehensions I cannot correct."

> ❛ Many people have complained to me that they were upset — not just misled — by what 'I' wrote'. ❜

He believed this would result in financial damage as people might not buy his future books, including the second volume of diaries he was contracted to prepare.

Mr Prescott said: "I am going to suggest that your real motive in bringing these proceedings is not to prevent *confusion or damage to your* reputation as a serious man of letters.

"But rather, I am going to suggest that your real motive is to hamper or prevent an effective form of criticism of you as a politician and as a *man — indeed, in your case,* the only really effective form of criticism, namely ridicule, and I'm going to suggest that it's a criticism you richly deserve. The other reason is because this spoof has injured your personal vanity, which is colossal."

Mr Prescott asked Mr Clark during nearly two hours of cross-examination: "Would it be fair to say that you are somewhat obsessed with your *personal appearance, your* physique and sexual attractiveness?"

Mr Clark replied: "Self-assessment is difficult enough when dealing with one's income tax. I think in relation to character, it's quite useless".

The spoofs, which first appeared shortly after Mr Clark was selected as a parliamentary candidate for Kensington and Chelsea, mocked him for being an "ageing roué". Mr Prescott said. In his own *Diaries*, counsel said, Mr Clark put a different gloss on his sexual adventures and came across as a "Don Juan with a twinkle in your eye".

Mr Clark said that on the contrary, his diaries contained references to his greying hair and physical decline. "I lament my physical failures of one sort or another. I don't think there are any entries of me being a winking Don Juan," he said.

When asked about his arrogance, Mr Clark agreed that he had described standing on a balcony at the Department *of Employment and feeling* the urge to relieve himself on the "ant-like crowds" below. He agreed that he had described Janet Foulkes, MP, as having a "vast arse", while Kenneth Clarke, the former Chancellor, was a "pudgy *puffball*", *William* Waldegrave was an "ambitious creep" and Tom King "blustering, bullying and stupid".

"You are pretty arrogant about the way of expressing yourself," Mr Prescott said. The MP replied that none of his colleagues had complained about the unflattering descriptions in his *Diaries*.

Mr Clark, who faced lengthy questioning on his succession of extramarital affairs, went on to say: "The most offensive part of Mr Bradshaw's so-called spoof is when he portrays me as some kind of Nazi sympathiser convening groups of people giving the Hitler salute." He read from *Barbarossa*, one of his historical works, in which he referred to the Nazi state as resting on a "basis of total brutality and corruption". He agreed that he had seen some merit in a controversial account of the Second World War by David Irving, the extreme right-wing writer.

The case continues today.

Clark yesterday: lamented his physical failures

Kyle wearing a pair of his silicone ears and displaying his spare set. He has one set for winter and one for summer

Deaf boy given artificial ears

BY IAN MURRAY
MEDICAL CORRESPONDENT

A BOY of ten, who was born without ears, has been fitted with an artificial pair that have given him hearing.

Kyle Williams was born without any ears because he suffers from a rare condition called Treachers syndrome. Now, thanks to a police identification expert and a specialist surgical team from the University Hospital in Birmingham, he can hear and has two pairs of silicone ears — a winter set and a slightly sunburnt summer set — that are indistinguishable from the real thing.

Kyle, from Rawmarsh, South Yorkshire, was fitted with a hearing aid when he was four. This enabled him to listen to music played on a specially adapted personal stereo and to hear conversations fairly well. Although surgeons had the expertise to fit the ears, he was told that he would have to wait until he was older to have the operation. But Kyle persuaded David Proops, the surgeon heading the team, to give him his ears early.

They were modelled from Kyle's 11-year-old sister, Leander, to ensure a family resemblance. Detective Constable Ian Bardell, South Yorkshire Police's facial identification expert, compiled a computer photofit to show him what they would look like.

The operation involves fitting two titanium screws into the bone of the skull where the ear normally is. Once these have become integrated in the bone, two small lugs are inserted into the screws and a small gold bar is placed across them. A synthetic ear is then fitted on to the bar.

Keep more sport on free TV, says BBC

BY CAROL MIDGLEY
MEDIA CORRESPONDENT

THE BBC yesterday called on the Government to add the European Football Championships, the Ryder Cup, Five Nations Rugby and the Commonwealth Games (in the UK) *to the list of sporting events* that must be broadcast on terrestrial television.

In its submission to the Government, the corporation said public accessibility to such events was crucial to a sense of shared national culture. The Department of Culture, Media and Sport has appointed a committee to consider which sporting occasions should be on the list.

The current listed eight are the Olympic Games, the FIFA World Cup finals, the FA Cup Final, Scottish FA Cup Final, Cricket Test matches involving England, Wimbledon finals, the Grand National and the Derby.

Will Wyatt, chief executive of BBC Broadcast, said that at the heart of the BBC's case was the question of whether "the big sporting events should only be available to those privileged enough to afford subscription television". He said free-to-air channels reached 97 per cent of the population compared with the 16 per cent of homes who subscribed to Sky Sports. An estimated 23.8 million viewers had watched the England v Germany Euro '96 semi-final on BBC and ITV; 3.8 million had watched the World Cup qualifier between Italy and England on BSkyB.

The driver who was *blind* and drunk

BY SIMON DE BRUXELLES

POLICE called to breath test a suspected drunk driver were astonished to find he was registered blind. Peter Langley, 40, could not see the end of his bonnet, but had managed to drive two miles before crashing into a parked car.

Magistrates at Newton Abbott heard that Langley's sight had worsened until he was registered blind in March this year. He had been out drinking with his girlfriend, who normally drove, but on this occasion she had been drinking too.

Langley, of Heathfield, Devon, admitted driving with more than twice the permitted level of alcohol in his breath. Magistrates in Newton Abbot adjourned sentence until January, but imposed an immediate driving ban on him.

This is unfair, says woman in Aids rumours at Army camp

BY PAUL WILKINSON

A TEENAGER alleged to be at the centre of an Aids scare involving hundreds of soldiers at the biggest Army base in Britain yesterday denied having the virus.

More than 7,000 soldiers have been warned about at least two women in the area who are believed to HIV-positive. The Army refused to identify them, but an 18-year-old living in a council estate at Colburn, on the edge of the sprawling camp, said that her life had been made a misery by rumours that she was HIV-positive and that she had slept with scores of soldiers.

She told a local radio station that she would take an Aids test to clear her name. She said: "People are making a big deal out of nothing. It is distressing me and the sooner I get the Aids test done, the better. I'd like to then get the test photocopied and send it around everywhere."

The teenager said she had a steady boyfriend but had attended parties at the two-bedroom ground floor flat of a close female friend which was visited by soldiers. She said: "This all started when I began *hanging around with her and* going out drinking and clubbing, but all the rumours are untrue. I don't want to go out into the street and show my face because of this, but I won't run away and move from the area."

Her friend, a 20-year-old woman who also lives in Colburn, accused people of attacking her because she liked to have a good time.

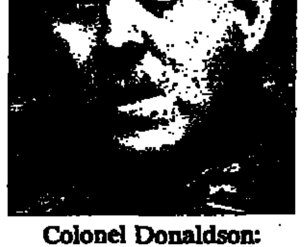
The soldiers were given their Aids warning on December 10 in a "special routine order" *from the garrison's* deputy commander, Colonel Neil Donaldson. Yesterday he declined to identify the source of a tip-off.

His order said: "It has been reported by a confidential source that at least two females living in the geographical area of Catterick Garrison have contracted the Aids virus and are HIV-positive. The same females are believed to *be liberal with their affections*, particularly to soldiers and are not averse to indulging in casual sex, often unprotected.

"All ranks are reminded that there is no known cure for Aids. In short, it is a killer. If you have had casual sex in this area, you are strongly advised to seek the advice of your medical officer without delay."

The response was so overwhelming that the base's confidential medical centre has *had to roster visits. No test* had proved positive so far.

A neighbour of the 20-year-old woman said: "Her place was like the Naafi."


Colonel Donaldson: confidential tip-off

A spokesman for North Yorkshire Health Authority said: "We have one of the lowest rates of Aids infection in the country. In the area we are talking about, there are in fact no people on record as *having Aids. The Army has* a duty of care to its soldiers, and it seems like a sensible precautionary step, but we would not wish to hype it up more than necessary."

Shot terrorist was ready to kill police who got in his way

Plan to 'whack' officers was captured by MI5 bug in hotel room of IRA suspects, writes **Stewart Tendler**

DIARMUID O'NEILL, the IRA quartermaster shot by police in West London, threatened to kill any police officers who tried to stop him, Scotland Yard disclosed last night.

Tapes recorded secretly by MI5 were released by police yesterday as members of O'Neill's gang were jailed at the Old Bailey.

Details of the tapes were given to the SO19 officers briefed to arrest the suspects the night before the raids. They were warned to expect oppostion. In fact O'Neill was unarmed. Yesterday the Yard released transcripts of a conversation between O'Neill and Patrick Kelly, who was jailed for 20 years.

O'Neill: *"When I'm out front and come in and say something like 'Mr Wilkinson. The police here want to talk to you,' you gotta go: 'What's going on here, mate. I dunno, mate. I'm just a member of the ... going to that lorry, just bought it ... It needs some work.'*

"If I come in and say that, you come out. Just let Eddie (Brian McHugh, leader of the gang) do it. You come out and kill the cops out front."

Kelly: *"Yeah."*

O'N: *"You got no fucking choice. No fucking choice."*

K: *"Then the shit hits the fan, then."*

O'N: *"Then we have to whack the two of them. They'll have no idea. We have a ... bit of breathing space, three or four hours of breathing space. You're fucked anyhow. That's what I am saying to yer.*

"If it gets to that stage you'd have to kill the coppers. You get caught otherwise. So if you are not prepared to shoot you leave yourself open." K: *"Yeah."*

Kelly also discussed attacking Belmarsh high-security prison in South London which holds many IRA terrorists.

Kelly: *"I think I should organise a big operation and blast the fuck out of Belmarsh."*

O'N: *"Belmarsh jail is inside a jail. There are people in a jail within a jail and there's a steel cage over the top of it. So they would have to blast their way in to blast a way out."*

K: *"Yeah."*

O'N: *"They wouldn't send a squad over to do that."*

K: *"Be good for morale to bust a few fellas out."*

The gang also discussed shooting down a police helicopter.

During the trial, the Old Bailey was told that O'Neill was with two other members of the gang sharing a room in the Premier West hotel in Hammersmith, West London, when the raid started. Police hoped to slip into the room using a key but it did not work. They then tried to remove the lock with a special ram but it slipped and made a hole.

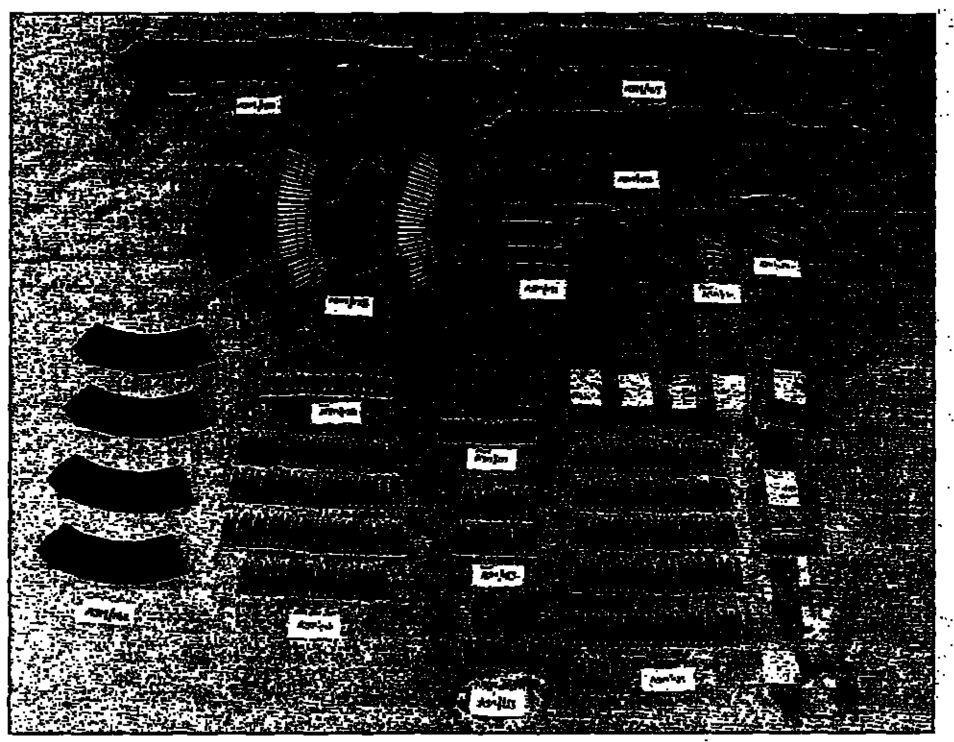
The police fired CS gas through the hole but some of the officers were also overwhelmed by it. An officer codenamed Kilo was one of the raiders. The terrorists inside the room ignored calls to come out and then the door opened and Kilo could see a figure who seemed to react to nothing the officer said. He repeatedly called for the man to show his hands.

Kilo told the court: "He had not replied to anything I said. His body language was aggresive. He leaned towards me in a boxer-type stance. I felt I was about to be shot because I thought I had heard shots coming from inside the room. I fired two shots in his direction. They did not appear to have any effect whatsoever. So I fired another two shots quickly followed by another two."

Under cross-examination Kilo said he never heard shouts of "Whoa, whoa" and "We give up." He did not hear a colleague order the suspects on to the floor or a voice say they were down. He was some distance away and struggling to breathe because of the CS gas.

End of IRA gang that planned to devastate London

By Stewart Tendler, Crime Correspondent



Weapons and ammunition found in self-storage unit at Hornsey, North London

IRA terrorists who plotted to devastate London with a series of massive lorry bombs were jailed for up to 25 years at the Old Bailey yesterday. Detectives believe the gang was going to attack one of London's largest shopping centres and the road system.

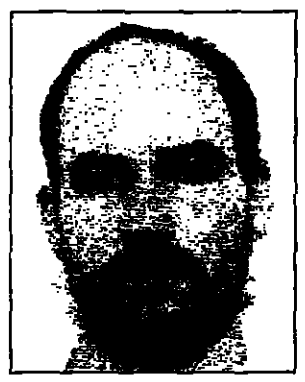
They were caught after the biggest surveillance operation ever carried out against terrorists on the British mainland. Hundreds of police and MI5 officers followed the gang for six weeks, recording their conversations and photographing them.

Yesterday Brian McHugh, 31, from Co Fermanagh, was jailed for 25 years as the commander of the gang. Patrick Kelly, also 31, from Co Longford, who was to have driven the lorry, got 20 years. James Murphy, 26, a groundsman at Latymer School, West London, was jailed for 17 years.

Michael Phillips, 22, a former British Airways engineer, was cleared of being in the plot. He hugged the convicted men before leaving the court.

IRA commanders based in South Armagh's "bandit country" had wanted to repeat the 1996 mayhem in Manchester city centre with a new attack in the capital. A single message passed from a telephone box in an Irish town close to the border would have sent a lorry bomb on its way.

The gang's quartermaster, Diarmuid O'Neill — later killed by a police marksman in a raid — had stockpiled 6.3 tonnes of homemade explosive, 22lb of Semtex and enough bombmaking equipment for up to four lorry bombs. Each would have been the equivalent to one of the bombs used for the Manchester attack. O'Neill and Kelly were heard discussing driving a four-tonne lorry bomb into the outskirts of London. It would have been the biggest device used on the mainland.



McHugh: commander of the bombers

Police now believe that O'Neill may have been involved in helping to arrange the Manchester blast and had spent years setting up a network of stores around London. Passing sentence, Mr Justice Smedley told McHugh his claims that the bomb material was simply being stored were "sheer hypocrisy". The intention was a bombing campaign aimed at innocent people, and he had been sent to conduct the final stages. Kelly, said the judge, was not a sophisticated terrorist but a dedicated IRA member. Murphy had been seduced by O'Neill's charisma.

Detectives never discovered the actual targets. They know the gang were considering West and East London, possibly close to Docklands. Several car bombs were stockpiled for attacks on individuals. The gang was brought together by senior IRA planners in February last year. A series of police successes and IRA errors had left the commanders desperate for success. Police had arrested one of the IRA's top units as it prepared to attack the electricity system for London and the South East.

O'Neill had been active as part of the IRA supply network since at least 1993. The Londoner had been jailed in 1988 for embezzling funds for the republican cause, and was still carrying out frauds on the DSS and local authorities.

He had rented a storage unit in Fulham, close to Chelsea football ground. Posing as the owner of a transport firm, he also rented a steel unit at a storage depot in Hornsey, North London, for "furniture storage". When the ceasefire ended in February last year, he was seen unloading five or six pallets of bags which appeared to be compost. They contained homemade explosive mixes.

O'Neill was joined by Murphy, and the gang grew to four with the arrival of Kelly and McHugh. The group used coded messages on pagers and mobile telephones. But they were under observation by teams of surveillance officers from MI5, Special Branch and the Yard's SO11 unit, which specialises in tailing leading criminals. Police will not say how they launched the operation, codenamed Tinnitus. Each of the suspects required up to 30 officers a day. Each surveillance team was backed by armed officers from the Yard's firearms branch.

On September 22, the police decided to strike. They believed the gang was getting close to action. It would only take a few minutes for a lorry to be loaded and sent to destruction. The first target might be decided the next morning. O'Neill died as the hotel room he shared with McHugh and Kelly was raided. A police marksman later said he acted in self-defence amid swirling CS gas.

Londoner was ready to bomb his home city

By Our Crime Correspondent

DIARMUID O'Neill, the IRA quartermaster killed by police, was born in London and attended one of the capital's best state schools. But by his 20s O'Neill had become a fervent Republican activist, helping to run the terrorist supply routes and featuring on a Scotland Yard file of terrorist suspects.

He was born to an Irish family in west London in 1969 and was sent to the Oratory School in Kensington — now attended by one of the sons of the Prime Minister. At Oratory, O'Neill was regarded as a model pupil and left with good O levels to work first in an employment office and then for an Irish bank.

But even in his teens he was committed to the cause of a united Ireland. In 1988 he was jailed for nine months for embezzling £75,000 from the bank and giving half to Republican fund-raisers. Released from prison, O'Neill claimed to be a carpenter but earnt a living from various crimes, including benefit fraud.

O'Neill, nicknamed Zoomer by his Republican friends, was also a key figure in the IRA support network. He visited Spain and kept a membership card for the political wing of the separatist movement as well as regalia worn for marches. The ETA terrorists have long had connections with the IRA, helping them to develop weapons.

In London O'Neill attended rallies and campaigned for the transfer of IRA prisoners. He made no secret of his views and could be an impressive debater, haunting Irish public houses and meeting places.

He began the first moves to stockpiling IRA supplies in 1993 but although he was suspected by police of taking part in terrorist work he could not be caught. Last year the IRA alerted him to help their B team launch attacks across his home city.

O'Neill: stockpiled arms for the IRA

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Mr and Mrs Allen are aged 48 and 47 and live in Liverpool. They have two children who are at school: James (13) and Sarah (16) who is entering the sixth form this year. Mr Allen is a policeman and Mrs Allen a college lecturer. The Allens are attracted to the flexibility of a Personal Choice Mortgage and the free remortgage package because Mrs Allen is going to become self-employed and work from home providing special courses to [illegible] students.

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They also intend to use their cheque book facility to help Sarah when she goes up to University in two years time.

Susan Olivet is aged 29 and single. She lives in Oxford and works as a freelance journalist. Susan intends studying for an MBA while continuing her work and is remortgaging her flat with a loan of £35,000 against a value of £65,000. She will raise capital of £10,000 with her Personal Choice Mortgage and use it to help to fund her studies.

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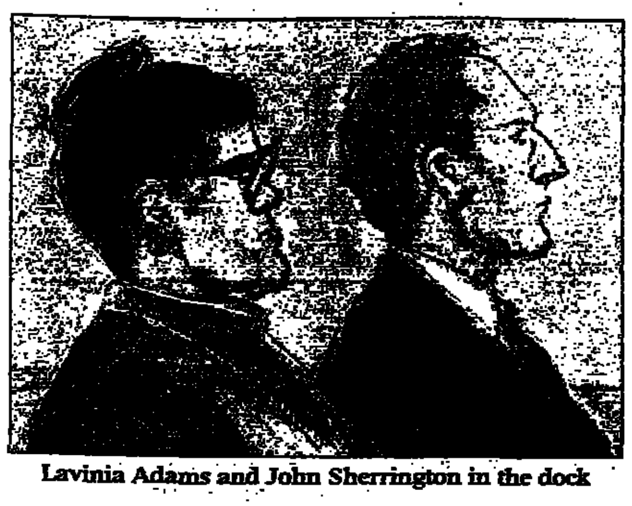
Couple jailed for cruelty over death of baby girl

By Kathryn Knight



Lavinia Adams and John Sherrington in the dock

A COUPLE who escaped a murder charge over the death of their baby daughter because of a legal loophole were jailed for seven and five years yesterday.

An Old Bailey judge said that neither John Sherrington nor Lavinia Adams could be sentenced for the death of 18-month-old Sarah Adams as it was uncertain who had struck the fatal blows.

The couple pleaded guilty to cruelty and neglect of Sarah, who suffered persistent abuse at their hands and died of a fractured skull and brain haemorrhage last November.

Had they been convicted of murder, they would have received mandatory life sentences. Instead, Sherrington, 33, was jailed for seven years and Adams, 32, for five.

Jailing the impassive pair yesterday, Judge Richard Hawkins said it was clear from the evidence that Sarah was "repeatedly injured" while in their care, but that the prosecution was unable to say who was directly responsible for her death. He could sentence them only for their "undoubted cruelty" to Sarah.

"The prosecution having been unable to establish against Adams that she encouraged Sherrington to assault Sarah in a joint enterprise that envisaged grevious bodily harm, the Crown were unable to proceed against either of you on the murder charge," the judge said.

Initially the couple had denied cruelty and, after the case opened last month, the jury listened to tapes made by Sherrington, Sarah's acting stepfather, taunting her as he held her in a tight leg lock. The child could be heard screaming in pain as Sherrington told her that he would give her a drink of "bleach mixed with carwash".

Orlando Pownall, for the prosecution, told the jury that Sherrington and Adams, who met on the estate where they both lived in Sutton, Surrey, and moved in together within days, had repeatedly abushed Sarah in the few months of their relationship.

When she was admitted to St Helier Hospital in Carshalton with fatal brain injuries, she had bite marks and bruising all over her body, including her feet. Yesterday the judge pointed out that the pair had gone shopping while their child lay dying in hospital.

On the second day of the trial, Sherrington, a bank messenger, admitted three charges of cruelty and wilful neglect. Adams, who was said to be suffering from mild mental retardation, also admitted three cruelty charges, including one of biting her daughter.

Judge Hawkins was later told that Adams had been dominated by her new boyfriend, who had also terrorised his previous wife by trying to strangle her and threatening her with a knife.

Their case follows at least eight others whose children had been battered to death while in their care but who have escaped murder or manslaughter charges because of the joint enterprise issue.

Child welfare workers and the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children have campaigned for a change in the law, but police and the Crown Prosecution Service find themselves handicapped by an appeal court ruling that there must be specific evidence of who caused the fatal injury to justify a murder charge.

Yesterday Wendy Lydon, whose three-year-old nephew, Tommy Lee Bannister, was battered to death in 1991 by his mother, Jacqueline, and her boyfriend, Robert Harvey, said the present situation was a national disgrace.

Ms Bannister and Mr Harvey were originally charged with manslaughter, but the charges were dropped because it could not be established which of them had killed the child. "The guilty are making a mockery of the legal system," Ms Lydon said. "I hoped my nephew would be the last to be let down in this way."

ENTERPRISE NEWS AND PICTURES

Eighteen-month-old Sarah Adams was repeatedly injured while in the couple's care

Company drivers go out of way to beat tax

By Kevin Eason
Motoring Editor

COMPANY car drivers complete up to 8.2 billion miles a year in unnecessary journeys to cut their tax bills, says a report out today. Average business mileage almost triples in March and April, just before the end of the tax year, so that drivers can reduce their liability by 35 per cent, the survey says.

The tax system has two mileage thresholds, at 2,500 and 18,000 miles. Each time company motorists cross a threshold, there is a 35 per cent reduction in their tax bill.

Journeys are often hastily arranged trips to outposts of the company empire to clock up enough miles, the report suggests. Robert Blower, of Arriva Automotive Solutions, a fleet company that surveyed 5,000 company motorists over 18 months, said: "It is very curious the way the amount of mileage suddenly jumps at the same time each year.

"And so strange that so many company drivers seem to feel the need to visit their branch office in somewhere like Aberdeen shortly before the tax year ends."

But Arriva warns Gordon Brown, the Chancellor, against imposing taxes to force drivers out of company cars. It says that they would use the family's second car or buy a cheaper, older and more polluting replacement.

The company suggests that the Government adopt a six-band system at 3,000, 7,000, 10,000, 13,000, 18,000 and 24,000 miles, offering a 10 per cent tax reduction at each threshold crossed. This would take the incentive out of chasing huge mileages.

Smoking victims in warning to the young

By Ian Murray
Medical Correspondent

A WOMAN who developed lung cancer at 34 is to start an anti-smoking campaign to warn young people about the dangers of tobacco. Tracey Cotton, who has two children, will be the first of three patients appearing on television advertisements.

All three began smoking as teenagers, and all volunteered to appear in the £2.5 million, government-funded campaign, which will include magazine and radio advertisements. The Health Education Authority says that 35 per cent of men and 29 per cent of women aged 16 to 24 are regular smokers, and about half will die early as a result.

Mrs Cotton, from Nottingham, will be the first patient to appear in the television advertisments, from Boxing Day. She started smoking at 13, and was diagnosed with lung cancer and a brain tumour two years ago after coughing up blood. Now 36, she has lost one lung and has secondary cancer. She says: "I kept thinking, 'I'm too young for lung cancer.'"

The two other patients are Sylvester Khokar, 32, from London, who had three heart attacks last year, and David Vaughan, 51, from Lincolnshire, who has chronic bronchitis and emphysema. Mr Vaughan is shown wearing a mask, coughing and spluttering as he speaks.

☐ Smokers suffer 60 per cent more minor ailments than non-smokers, according to Tony Ward, a health psychologist at Luton University. In a survey, smokers were more likely to have colds, toothache and eyestrain.

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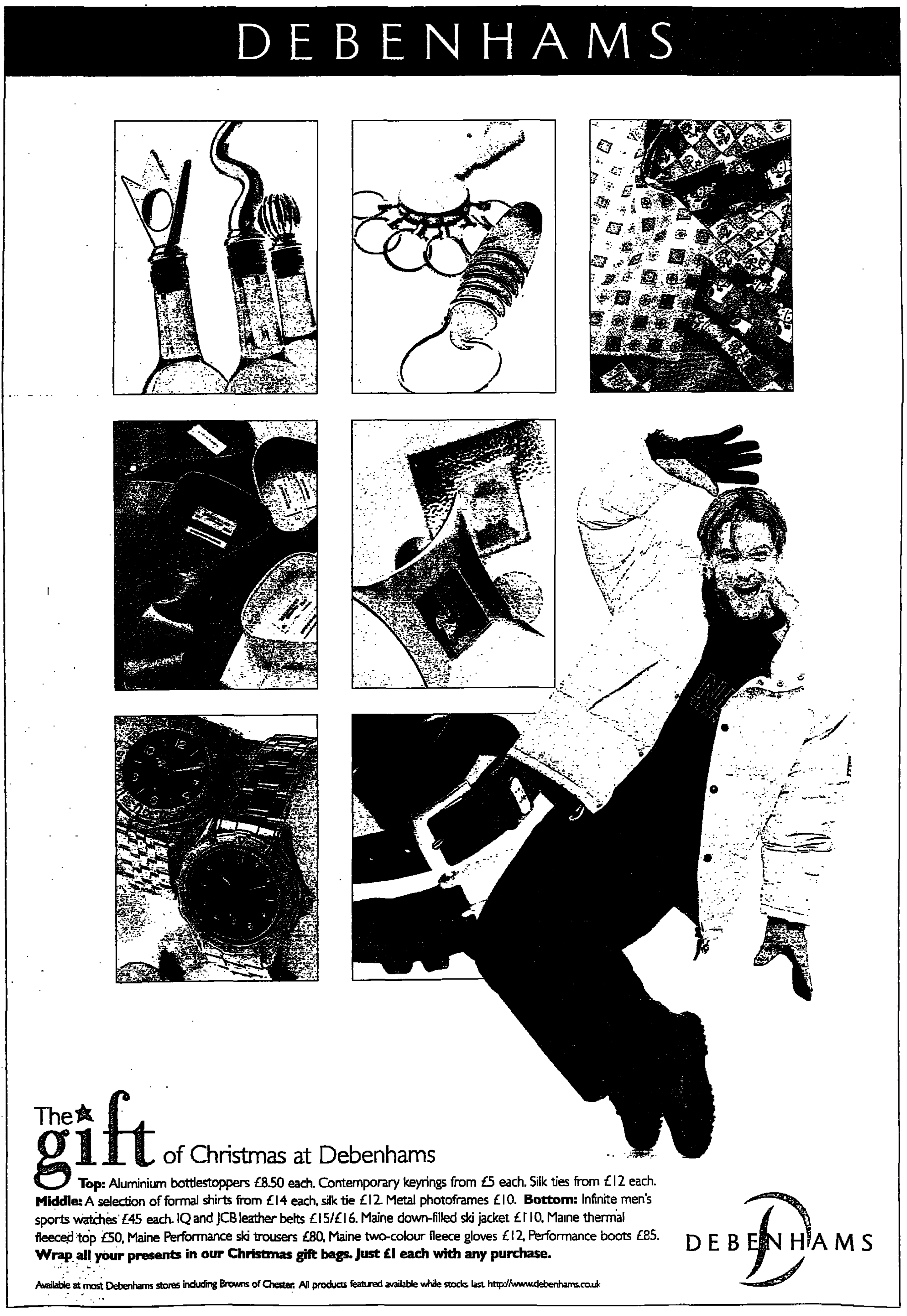

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Students urged to cut drop-out rate by taking gap year

By David Charter, Education Correspondent

SCHOOL-LEAVERS were yesterday advised to take a year off, rather than rush to university, after research showed that the £178 million cost of drop-outs would be slashed by better preparation.

Up to 10 per cent of undergraduates fail to finish their degrees, but half return to study within a year, often at another university, research has shown. The Higher Education Funding Council, which commissioned the study, said a year off would allow ill-prepared school-leavers to address the main reasons for dropping out: poor choice of course or institution, and cash problems.

The researchers concluded: "School-leavers who are unclear about the choice of programme should consider the advantages of taking a period of time between leaving school and entering higher education. Those in schools who are responsible for advising on careers may do their charges a greater service by explaining the virtues of not rushing into higher education." A year off would help them to "clarify their educational aims and, perhaps, to build up a reserve of money to help them through higher education".

The annual cost to the state of students dropping out was put at £91 million, assuming that full years completed by the one third of drop-outs who leave in their second or third year is money well spent. The cost rises to £178 million if all the money spent on a student is considered "wasted".

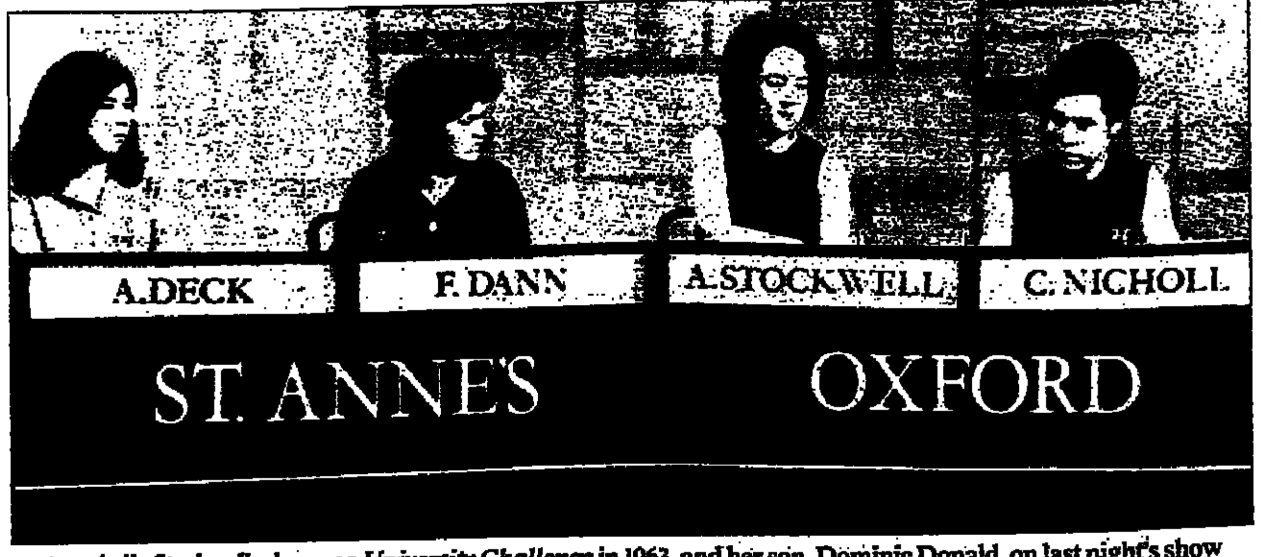
A total of 1,478 students were questioned, from 23 institutions, including King's College, London, and Luton University. One in five of the drop-outs in 1994-95 left because of academic failure. A quarter of those failing to complete their degrees ruled out returning to university.

In a warning over the introduction of course fees and the abolition of grants, the study found that working-class students were the group most likely to drop out because of financial pressures. "This is a matter which might be given some consideration by those with a concern for policy related to social justice."

The funding council said the biggest influence on the decision to drop out was lack of preparation, leading to unrealistic expecatations and poor practical skills.

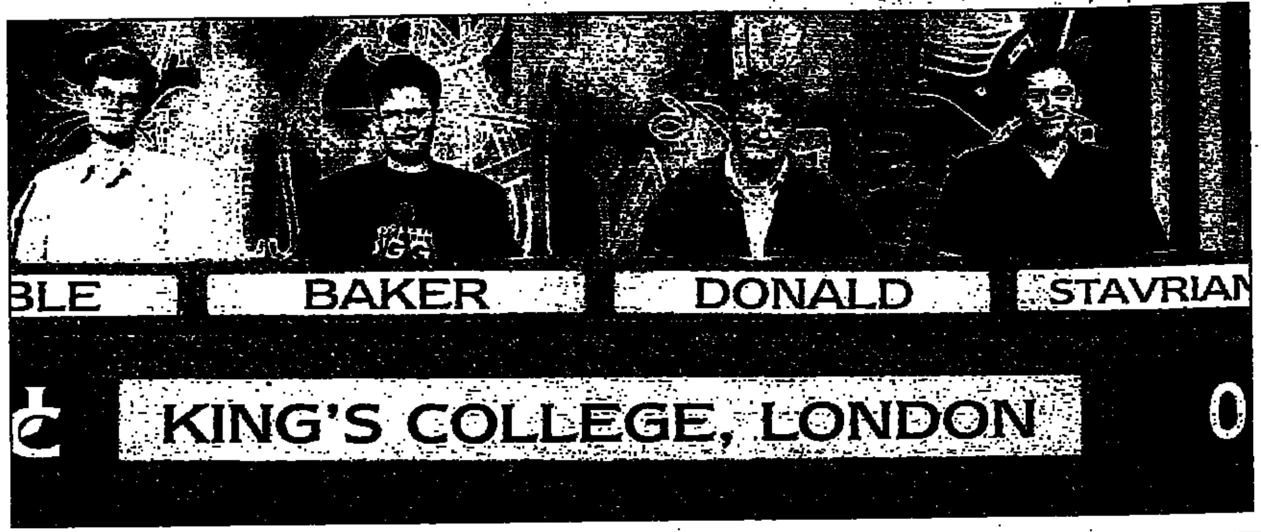
The researchers recommended that schools, further education colleges and higher education institutions could reduce drop-out rates by providing better information and advice to potential students, and offering more training in study skills and practical skills such as managing finances.

They also called for a rethink of the clearing system, so that students had more time to consider their options.



CAVENDISH

Annabelle Stockwell, above, on *University Challenge* in 1963, and her son, Dominic Donald, on last night's show



First for son who rose to family challenge

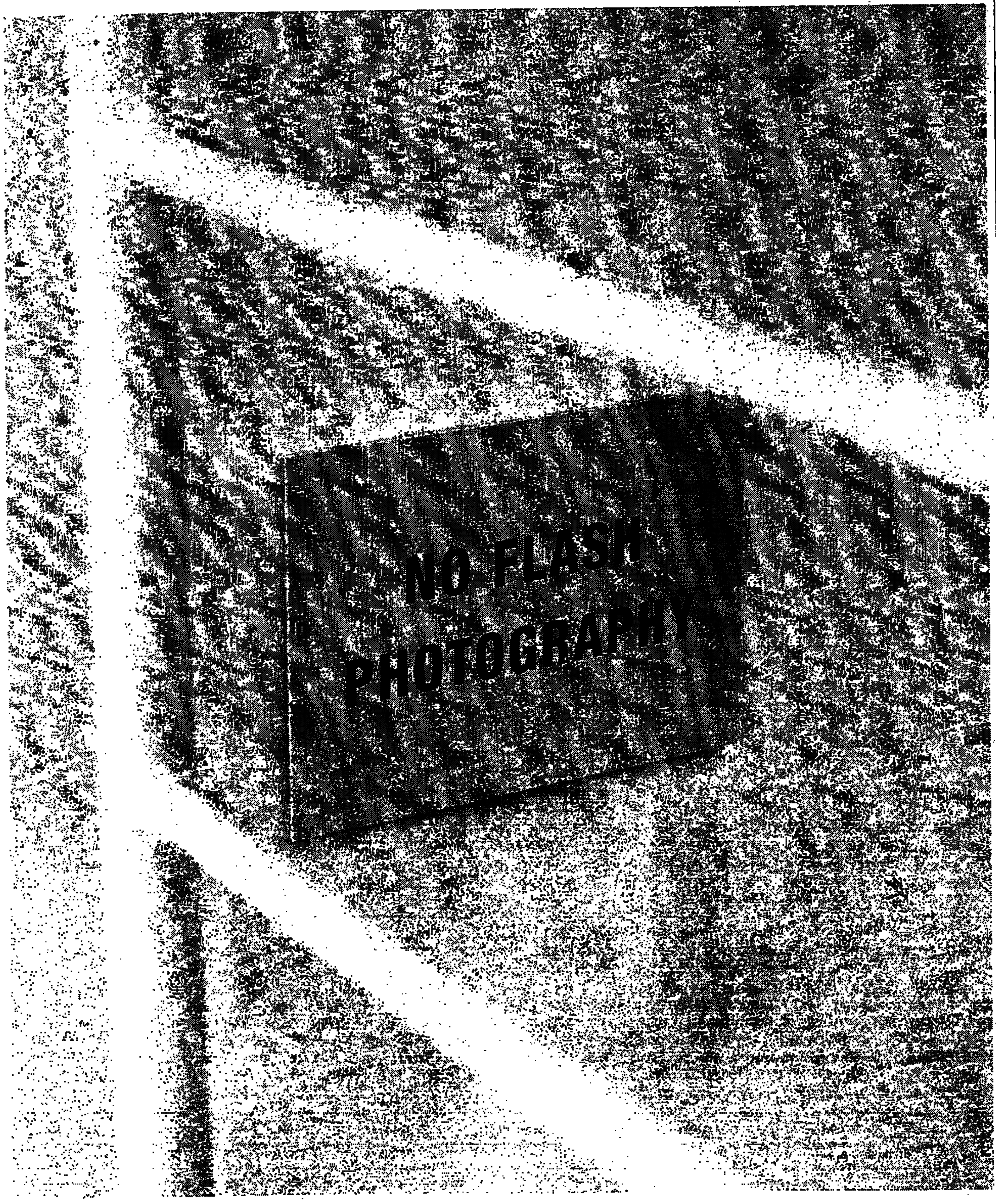
By John O'Leary

A 30-YEAR-OLD postgraduate student created a *University Challenge* record last night before the first question was asked by becoming the first child of a contestant to take part in the long-running quiz show.

Dominic Donald, 30, was not even a twinkle in his mother's eye when 19-year-old Annabelle Stockwell captained St Anne's College, Oxford, to victory in the first round of the 1963 series. Last night he followed in her footsteps as captain of the team from King's College, London.

King's were beaten by Nottingham University by 230 points to 215. Mr Donald said: "I have to recognise Mum is the genius of the family after all."

Mrs Donald became an English teacher and writer of detective novels. Her son graduated from Magdalen College, Oxford, and is now reading war studies. He said: "It was something I've always wanted to do ever since I found out Mum was on."



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Throughout these various trials and tribulations it's worth remembering that things could be an awful lot worse. You could have bought a compact camera that no-one pays any attention to whatsoever.

Now that really would have been a pity.

THE NEW OLYMPUS MJU II

Double agent Blake forced to forfeit royalties

By Richard Ford, Home Correspondent

GEORGE BLAKE, the double agent whose treachery cost the lives of many British spies, has been barred from receiving £90,000 in royalties from the sale of his memoirs after the Court of Appeal ruled yesterday that he should not profit from his crimes.

Lord Justice Woolf, the Master of the Rolls, and two other judges granted an injunction stopping the publishers from sending any more money to Blake, who lives modestly in Moscow.

Blake, a former officer with the Secret Intelligence Service (SIS) who worked for the KGB, has already received a £50,000 advance for his book *No Other Choice*. Published by Jonathan Cape in 1991, it sold 17,000 of the 19,000 copies printed. Counsel for the Attorney-General said the Government hoped that Jonathan Cape would donate the royalties to charity.

Yesterday's ruling overturned a judgment given in the High Court in April which said that the Crown's insistence of a lifelong duty of fidelity for security service members represented an "interference with rights of free expression".

A duty to refrain from disclosing information that was neither secret nor confidential was not necessary in a democratic society in the interests of national security, the High Court said.

But the Master of the Rolls, sitting with Lords Justices Millett and Mummery, said yesterday: "The ordinary member of the public would be shocked if the position was that the courts were powerless to prevent the respondent profiting from his criminal conduct."

In a written judgment, they said that the remedy should be designed to achieve the public law policy of preventing the offender from profiting as a result of, or in connection with, his crime.

Blake, 73, was responsible for the deaths of several British agents after he became a Russian spy in the wake of his capture by North Koreans and conversion to communism.

On May 3, 1961, he pleaded guilty to five counts of unlawfully communicating information contrary to the Official Secrets Act and was sentenced to 42 years' imprisonment. It was said later that his sentence represented a year for every agent betrayed. In 1966 he escaped from jail and made his way to Berlin and later to Moscow.

Lord Justice Woolf said that, in submitting the book for publication without obtaining clearance, Blake was in breach of contract, entitling the Crown to an injunction and damages.

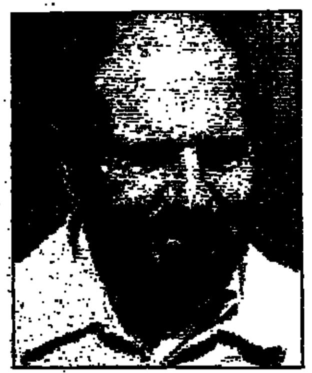
He said that, by disclosing information relating to security or intelligence gained as a result of his position as a member of the SIS, Blake had committed a criminal offence.

The Attorney-General had the power to enforce public policy aimed at preventing a criminal further benefiting from the crime.

The appeal judges said: "It is obvious that, if the respondent had not been a notorious spy who had also dramatically escaped from prison, royalties of this order would never have been paid to him for his autobiography."

Jonathan Cape agreed to pay Blake £50,000 when he signed the contract, £50,000 when it received the manuscript and £50,000 on publication. The Attorney-General has never tried to stop publication of the book.

The appeal judges said that the Attorney-General was entitled to relief in public law "in his historic role as guardian of the public interest".



Blake: has already been paid £50,000 for his book

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'They consider themselves above the law and make no attempt to conceal their crimes,' a policeman said

Youth gang linked to murder, rape and street attacks

Reports by Lin Jenkins

A TEENAGE gang modelled on the Triads was behind the murder of the headmaster Philip Lawrence, the stabbing of the husband of the Director of Public Prosecutions, and the gang rape of a tourist.

The gang remains active today despite many of the leaders being behind bars. They operate in central and North London, meeting in amusement arcades and pool halls in King's Cross, Chinatown, the Strand and Trafalgar Square, and use violent mugging to fund their drug use.

They are routinely armed with knives, swords and martial arts weapons. A cigarette burn between thumb and forefinger indicates membership.

One policeman said: "What struck me was their routine use of violence. They consider themselves above the law and make no attempt to conceal their crimes."

Scores of unsolved robberies using weapons, a rape and several assaults are believed to be their work. In one attack, a man's pelvis was shattered.

The gang came to the attention of the police when the husband of Dame Barbara Mills, the Director of Public Prosecutions, was stabbed in a street robbery in north London in 1995 after handing over his wallet. Mr Mills had been approached by half a dozen youths as he got out of his car near his home.

THE RECORD

They demanded money and Mr Mills decided to co-operate. Before he could, he was kicked, thumped and stabbed. The knife had severed an artery in his stomach and he nearly died.

Bernard Enerio was convicted of his part in the crime and had his six-year sentence reduced to four on appeal. Gregory Jananto was jailed for eight years. Learco Chindamo, who killed Mr Lawrence in an attack seven months later, was questioned but not charged.

In December 1995, Mr Lawrence was murdered as he went to protect a pupil outside the school who was being beaten with a dumbbell. Chindamo and Christopher Gan were convicted for their part in that crime.

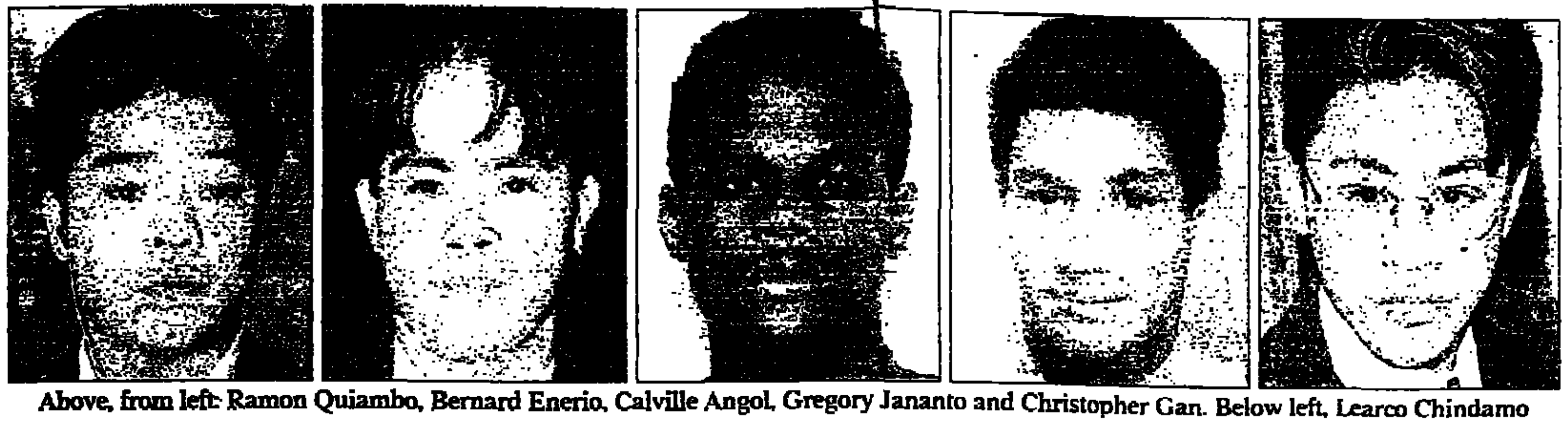
Twelve days before that murder, Chindamo and others made an unprovoked attack on a student, Jonathan Roberts, in Oxford Street, smashing a bottle over his head. Chindamo was the only one prosecuted for the crime. He was jailed for three years to run concurrently with his detention for the murder.

Youths with affiliations to the same gang came to the attention of police in September 1996 when a 32-year-old Austrian tourist was gang-raped, thrown into a canal and left for dead. The mother of two had gone for a late-night stroll from her hotel near King's Cross during a shopping trip to London.

One of her attackers, Alan Agum, then 14, was the only one of eight who denied the crime, forcing her to give evidence at the Old Bailey in April this year.

Calville Angol and Edwardo Agum were among eight youths sentenced to ten to 12 years for their part in the crime. The others, all members of the same gang, were Agum's brother Allan, Leon McClean, Timothy Davies, Adrian Henry, Nicholas Mavrides and another Colombian youth who cannot be named for legal reasons.

A month after the rape, members of the same gang attacked Antony Garcia shortly before he was to give evidence at the Old Bailey against Chindamo for the murder of Mr Lawrence. Ramon Quiambo, Jananto and Roland Ramos were prosecuted for violent disorder and attempting to pervert the course of justice.



Above, from left: Ramon Quiambo, Bernard Enerio, Calville Angol, Gregory Jananto and Christopher Gan. Below left, Learco Chindamo

Truants who learnt the ways of easy violence

LEARCO CHINDAMO, now 17, arrived in Britain aged nine with his brothers Rocco, now 14, and Wolfgang, 18, both part of the gang. His father, Massimo, a Mafia mobster, is known as Acid Man after his favoured method of attack, and the young Chindamo developed a free and easy way with a knife to impress his father.

His mother, Pacquita Torres, 46, moved to London from the Philippines, leaving her children with an aunt, when a relative told her of the good life to be had on state benefits. The children followed.

Semi-literate after years of truancy, Chindamo taught younger boys in Camden, North London, how to use knives and coshes. An intelligence test in 1995 placed him in the bottom 9 per cent of the population.

Gregory Jananto, 18, has never before been named for his involvement in the stabbing of John Mills because of the trial that ended yesterday. He once smashed a bottle over a fellow pupil. "He was a nutter," said one member of staff at St Richard of Chichester School, Camden.

THE GANG

Roland Ramos, 18, was part of the hardcore of Filipinos in the gang. He thought nothing of brandishing a knife.

Ramon Quiambo, 18, was one of Chindamo's closest friends at school. His Filipino single mother had no idea of her son's links with crime.

Calville Angol was 18 at the time of the rape, and on bail for other offences. He was of very low intelligence and regularly hung out around King's Cross.

Adrian Henry, a 6ft, 17-stone Afro-Caribbean, was in the care of Beatrice House, a privately run children's home in Finsbury Park, North London, at the time of the rape, when he was 14. He was also on bail for mugging a woman and for setting fire to his room at the home.

Edwardo and Allan Agum, brothers aged 16 and 15, lived in Hackney, East London, but joined the gang through the close-knit Filipino community. Their mother, Egtelita, who was separated from their father, worked long hours, leaving them to wander for hours through the night. Neither brother can make himself understood in English.

Timothy Davis, 17, lives with his deeply religious Venezuelan mother and sister in Clerkenwell, Central London. She was at a loss to understand how her son became involved in crime.

Nicholas Mavrides, 16, was blamed by the rape gang for them getting caught. He told his mother of the crime and she told the authorities.

On the night after the rape Leon McClean, 15, was recorded by security cameras laughing and joking. The court was told that this was as a result of recalling the rape.

Witness lives in fear after doing 'one good thing in my life'

A FORMER gang member who did the "one good thing in my life" and testified against the killer of the headmaster Philip Lawrence is living in fear of his life (Lin Jenkins writes).

THE INFORMER

Antony Garcia's recollection of the killer's confession, given in a smoke-filled pool hall, helped to convict Learco Chindamo and gave police clues that enabled them to unravel scores of other crimes. He has been repeatedly threatened, abused, chased and attacked. A panic button installed in his home allows him to summon the police at will, but he is concerned that it could prove useless in a determined effort to kill him. Those who have taunted him, chased him, pulled a knife on him and sprayed threatening graffiti over the door to the block of flats where he lives have not been apprehended. Wherever he goes, he is aware of a lurking menace.

Aftab Jaferjee, prosecuting at the latest trial, said: "He had the courage to give evidence against a murderer. Life for Mr Garcia was never going to be free from trouble. His life was bound to become fraught with an ever-present menace of threats and lurking violence." Mr Garcia, 20, who works in a shop, said: "I have not led a good life, but I do one good thing and my whole life is a mess."

Police know the identity of some of those behind the harassment, but do not have sufficient evidence to bring them to court. Mr Garcia was chased out of Euston station in January by some of the gang, who said: "You are going to die this year." In April he was mugged in a park at knifepoint. Keys to his house and car were taken and he was told: "We are going to do you, you grass."

Graffiti sprayed on the communal door to the flats where he lives read: "How many lives do you have?". The question was written on the day Chindamo was sentenced. Last month he was called to the telephone at work, and threatened by an anonymous caller.

When police stopped his car in May as he drove home from seeing relatives in Southend, Essex, they found a baseball bat in the boot, adapted with a metal spike in the top. Two wooden staves were under the footmat. He said he needed them for protection and was cautioned.

Detective Superintendent Brian Edwards, who led the inquiry into the murder, told David Farrer, QC, the Recorder: "He has changed his accommodation, which has alleviated the problem, but he still feels very vulnerable."

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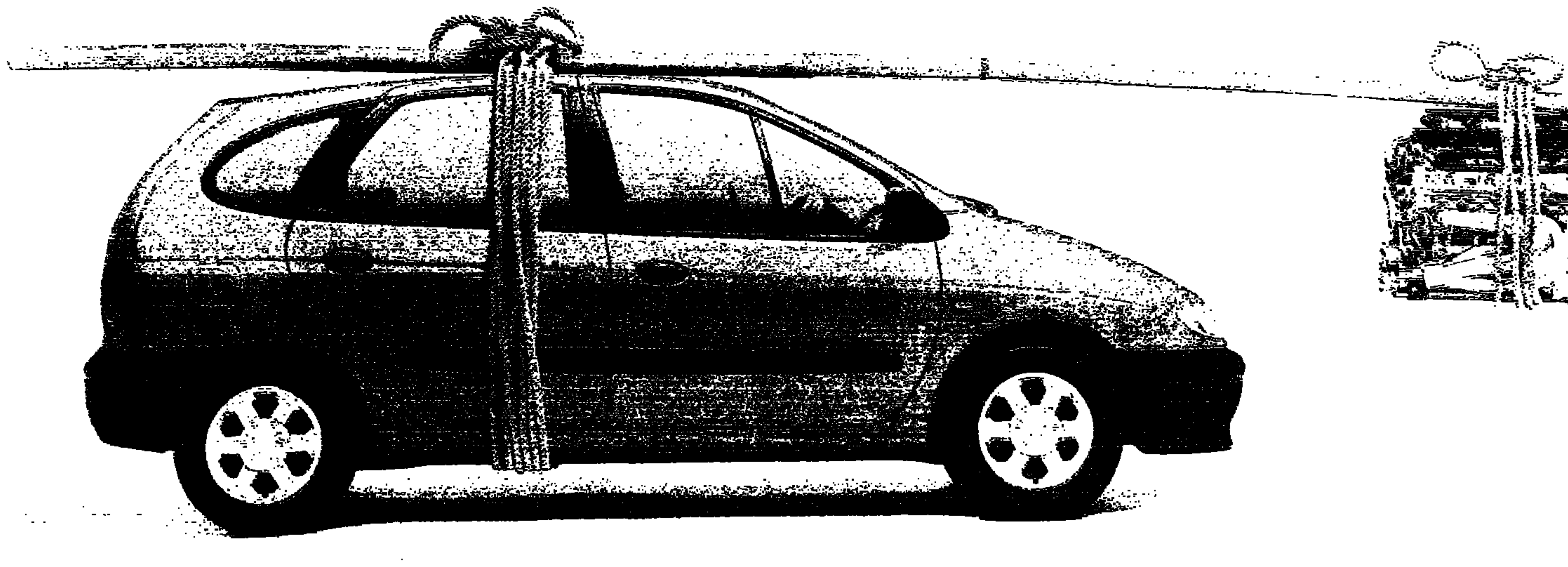

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Renault Scenic Car of the year 1997

RENAULT

Art trade to see vast changes after Sotheby's inquiry

New rules for making bids and training in the law are likely, reports

Dalya Alberge

THE $11-million investigation into allegations that Sotheby's smuggled works of art will not result in any member of staff losing their job. But the company claims the conclusions will radically alter the way it does business.

It had commissioned two independent law firms to conduct an internal review, handing over thousands of pages of records to be analysed in an investigation that lasted ten months.

Davis Polk & Wardwell in New York and Slaughter and May in London examined more than 8,000 transactions during 1996, interviewed more than 200 employees and produced findings that will have far-reaching implications for the art trade. Changes in their code of conduct means they will always announce in the saleroom when an item has not found a buyer.

Despite the thoroughness of the investigation, the review copies released to *The Times* and members of Sotheby's staff extended to only eight pages. At first glance, the contents seemed couched in vague terms, praising for example the staff's co-operation and noting how accusations about smuggling in the media had been "troubling".

There was, in fact, a split within Sotheby's over whether the full findings should be published. "Blame the lawyers for that decision," Henry King, a senior partner with Davis Polk & Wardwell of New York, told *The Times*.

However, the recommendations and observations were far more decisive and drastic than anyone had expected.

Sotheby's will not sell anything with a dubious provenance and staff will be educated in international law. The lawyers found: "Resources that had been devoted to education, training and compliance issues were inadequate, given the complexity of the business and the international legal environment in which the company operates around the world today."

The auction house has appointed a worldwide "compliance director" and is developing a compliance department "to oversee and implement internal rules and procedures" and ensure that all employees are adequately trained in the rules. The review noted the confusion over some countries having legal restrictions over any art or antiques, not just to material that could be classified as cultural heritage; and others adopt a licensing approach. Self-imposed strictures about handling imported works of art goes further than the company's legal responsibilities. Dede Brooks, Sotheby's chief executive, said that America does not recognise the export laws of countries other than Mexico, Peru and Canada, meaning that it is not illegal to sell objects that were illegally exported from their country of origin. In taking this unprecedented decision, they were setting an example that she expects other auction houses and dealers to follow.

The review suggests that most of the accusations made by Peter Watson in the *Dispatches* programme and his book refer to incidents that occurred many years ago.

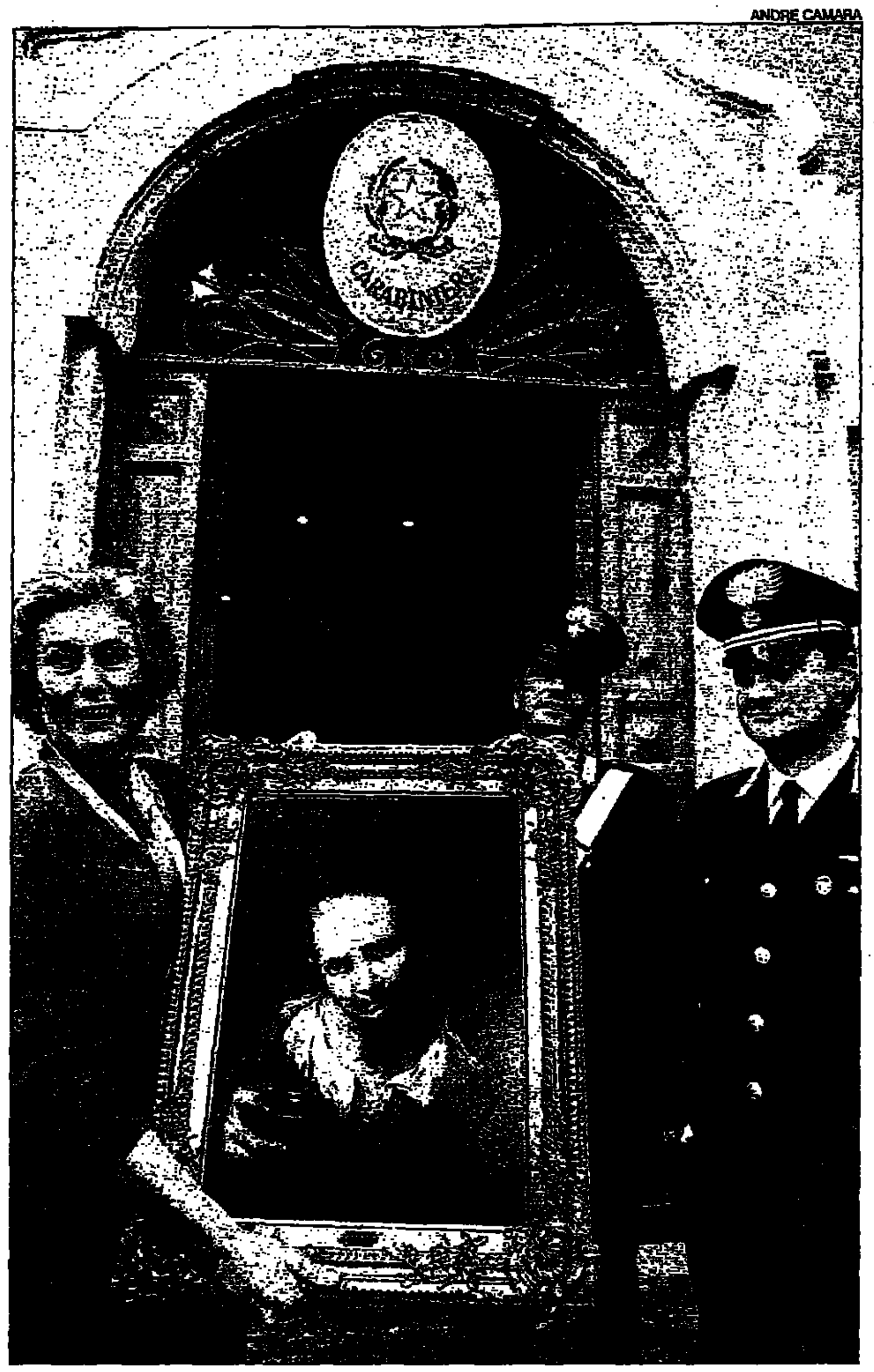
The Channel Four undercover film involving the 18th-century Italian Old Master was made in 1996. Mrs Brooks insisted this was "a one-off incident".

The review notes how specific policies and controls needed to be strengthened and Sotheby's is tightening up its entire code of conduct. It has, for example, introduced a more detailed warranty on contracts in which the owner reassures them that the property was legally exported and legally imported.

"Chandelier bids" — in which an auctioneer pretends to take non-existent bids to create a buzz of interest — will no longer be possible.

Leading article, page 19

ANDRE CAMARA



The painting that was illegally imported by Sotheby's to London from Milan

The report is welcome, but some questions are left hanging

*Expert **Peter Watson**, who made the allegation against Sotheby's, tells how he lost friends from the art world after publishing his exposé*

IN the wake of the two *Dispatches* programmes earlier this year, and publication of my book, *Sotheby's Inside Story*, which together exposed several acts of wrongdoing inside the auction house, I lost several friends in the art world.

I had anticipated something of the sort but the reason was interesting. People didn't dispute the unsavoury facts of the exposé; rather they implied that *some* insiders had known all along that such practices went on, were indeed widespread throughout the art world, that many foreign laws were rightly regarded as a joke, and that attention should not be drawn to these matters.

The reaction to the programmes, and the serialisation of the book in *The Times*, provoked headlines in more than 50 countries worldwide, and the book has been translated into several languages. That the London art world differs so much in its reaction from everyone else reflects partly on its misplaced sense of priorities and partly on its arrogance. In fairness to Sotheby's, although this same brand of arrogance had led some of its employees down questionable paths, which our investigations highlighted, the report thankfully does not adopt that tone.

However, there are certain hard questions that remain.

1: The lawyers, Slaughter & May and Davis Polk & Wardwell, who helped the review committee, never interviewed me or anyone else associated ith the programmes or the book. They sent a number of faxes but *never followed through* properly.

2: The attorney who is to head the new compliance department is the very woman who sat in on my interview with Felicity Nicholson, then head of antiquities and, when the interview turned to wrongdoing in Ms Nicholson's department, raised the issue of Ms Nicholson having another appointment. Viewers of the programme may recall that I then telephoned Ms Nicholson a short while later, from outside the Sotheby's building, to find that she was already back in her office. This attorney thus has some way to go before she convinces me she is the right choice for this job.

4: Most important, however, are Sotheby's activities in relation to antiquities. The company has made it known privately that it intends to take a much more stringent attitude in selling goods of doubtful origin. The only conclusion to that line of reasoning is that it must stop selling the 70-90 per cent of antiquities, ethnographical and pre-Columbian objects that are unprovenanced. If Sotheby's really grasps this issue it will have taken a massive step towards cleaning up the art trade and will truly justify the final words of the letter sent yesterday to all employees, regarding a "commitment to take a leadership role on ethical and legal practices".

Watson: author of *Sotheby's Inside Story*

Italian 'smuggling' dossier sent to Scotland Yard

By Daniel McGrory and Dalya Alberge

ITALIAN police investigating allegations that art treasures were smuggled to Britain for auction have now sent a 300-page dossier to Scotland Yard.

Their 11-month inquiry is believed to reveal the concern in Italy about the increasing number of art works illegally taken to London and European cities for sale.

An undercover operation earlier this year, revealed in *The Times* and by Channel 4's *Dispatches* programme, traced how a Sotheby's Old Masters expert in Milan helped deliberately evade export laws to get an 18th-portrait for sale in London. At the same time police in India are still investigating the theft of antiquities after an exposé of how auction houses encouraged the looting of national treasures.

Sotheby's last night insisted all its staff will give full cooperation to continuing police enquiries. As well as the international allegations against them, Peter Watson, a British journalist who first exposed the smuggling, also claims that Sotheby's — the world's oldest and biggest auctioneers — rigged its London sales.

In February, Sotheby's suspended senior staff after an undercover operation showed Roeland Kollewijn — its Old Masters expert in Milan — arranging for a painting by Giuseppe Nogari to be smuggled Sotheby's London office.

A hidden camera carried by an woman investigator from Channel 4 *Dispatches* programme filmed Roeland Kollewijn helping to move the work by the Italian painter. Mr Kollewijn was shown making a series of damaging admissions acknowledging that it was illegal for the portrait — *Old Woman with a Cup* — to leave Italy. Sotheby's expert is seen coaching the woman, who claims she has inherited a sizeable collection of paintings in Italy, on how to smuggle these works to England.

He boasts to the woman how Italy gets "rather upset about losing works of art. It's more or less the only natural resource they have … they don't have oil or whatever so they are very strict". He says such practises are "happening all the time".

Investigators from the *Dispatches* programme also alleged that Sotheby's auctioned Indian antiquities smuggled to Britain by Bombay dealers. Last night Sotheby's chief executive Dede Brooks said the auction house had sent a 25-page letter pointing out factual inaccuracies in Mr Watson's exposé. She said they had not had a reply.

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Beatrix Potter rabbit makes record sale

By John Shaw

A WATERCOLOUR by Beatrix Potter intended as a design for a Christmas card sold for a record £38,900 at Bonhams in London yesterday.

It showed a rabbit with an umbrella and basket stepping from his front door into a light covering of snow watched by his wife. The tiny illustration measuring 4½in by 6½in had been estimated to make £1,000.

The watercolour went to J Reisler, an American dealer, after a bidding contest with a collector. A spokesman said afterwards: "This is the best Potter illustration we have seen on the market and we have been dealing in this field for 28 years."

The drawing was signed with the author's initials and dated to about 1890. The style and subject matter are similar to other illustrations by her but the watercolour was in good condition and fresh to the market. It came from an anonymous private source.

A sketch of Eeyore, the donkey from *Winnie the Pooh*, went for £3,335 against an estimate of £500. It was drawn by E. H. Shepard on a scrap of paper.

Animal slippers that can go wild

By Ian Murray

THEY may look cute in the shops, but take them home and they can become a menace lurking at the feet of your loved ones. Floppy, animal-shaped slippers were targeted yesterday in a health warning on the perils of Christmas.

Over the festive season, more than 30,000 people are expected to be injured at home by falls, including about 7,500 on stairs. According to the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents, an unspecified number are the result of trying to master the art of walking while wearing cuddly footwear given as gifts.

Other falls are blamed on tripping over wrapping paper or presents on the carpet, slipping on turkey grease on the kitchen floor, or negotiating a staircases after a tipple too many. The society's festive warnings include keeping children away from alcohol and knives, and changing Christmas tree bulbs only with the current switched off. The number of home accidents is about the same as the rest of the year, but the causes are different, said the society.

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Badgers to be culled in trial to save cattle

By Michael Hornsby, Agriculture Correspondent

BADGERS are to be culled in trial areas to find the best way of halting the increase in tuberculosis among dairy cattle. The culls, in "hot spots" with the highest levels of bovine TB, will last for five years to allow comparison of different culling methods with a policy of no culling at all.

Jeff Rooker, the Food Safety Minister, announced the experiment yesterday on the advice of an independent review group of scientists headed by John Krebs, Royal Society Research Professor in the Zoology Department of Oxford University.

"Next to BSE, bovine TB is the most serious animal disease that the Ministry of Agriculture has to deal with," Mr Rooker said. "The report by the group gives us an updated and authoritative basis on which to proceed."

The report, commissioned by the previous Government and released yesterday, concludes that "*evidence strongly* supports the view that, in Britain, badgers are a significant source of [TB] infection in cattle".

Professor Krebs said that policies in the 1970s and 1980s of killing all badgers in TB-infected areas had suggested that the culls could reduce the incidence of the disease in cattle. But culling policies had never been subjected to scientific analysis.

Farmers' groups yesterday welcomed the report's acknowledgement of the probable link between badgers and bovine TB, but voiced dismay that all badgers in infected areas would not be slaughtered immediately. Farmers are also worried that the limited culling now carried will be suspended outside the trial areas.

The National Farmers' Union called the report a watershed that vindicated what farmers had been saying for a long time, but said that, during the trials, many farm businesses would be left unprotected. Sir David Naish, its president, said that while evidence was being collected, "many farming families will be facing ruin".

Ministry of Agriculture officials admit that the current policy has failed to slow the rise in the number of herds with TB outbreaks, up from 125 in 1991 to 471 last year. Badgers are culled only if they are *found on* a TB-affected farm and lactating sows with young are excluded. Under the most drastic of the options to be tested, all badgers, including lactating sows, will be killed.

The culling will be done by trapping and shooting. Animal welfare groups said they remained to be convinced that culling was necessary. "Current control strategies have not worked," Colin Booty, of the RSPCA, said. "We fear that the inclusion of lactating sows in the culls could leave young cubs to starve."

Although the number of herds infected with TB is only about 1 per cent, of all herds, the incidence of the disease has been increasing and has spread out of South West England to areas with no recent history of infection. A recent study put the badger population at more than 400,000, a 77 per cent increase on previous estimates.

Badgers are TB threat

CLAUDIO SILLERO-ZUBIRI

Claudio Sillero-Zubiri, the project leader, with a drugged Ethiopian wolf

Man who keeps the company of wolves

By Philip Delves Broughton

THE TIMES CHRISTMAS APPEAL

IN 1991 a rabies epidemic swept southern Ethiopia. The disease was carried by the dogs used by the Oromo tribe to round up their cattle. From them, it spread quickly, reducing the population of Ethiopian wolves, once numbered in thousands, to just 400.

Not quite a wolf, but the closest living relation to one, the Ethiopian wolf is a benign creature and now one of the most endangered large mammals in the world. Claudio Sillero-Zubiri has devoted the past few years to keeping the last of these wolves alive, with the support of the Born Free Foundation, one of the two charities nominated by *The Times* this year for its Christmas appeal. Dr Sillero-Zubiri lives in the wolves' natural habitat in the Bale mountains, south of Addis Ababa, at an altitude of 3,000 metres.

His strategy to save the wolf population is twin-pronged. First, he must ensure that the disease-carrying dogs are vaccinated and cared for better by their owners. The next stage is a breeding programme.

He has already begun a vaccination programme to prevent rabies and canine distemper, working with Karen Laurenson, a Scottish vet. Earlier this year, he published a children's book, *The Wolf Watchers*, about the plight of the Ethiopian wolf and the efforts to save it, which has been translated into Oromo. His work persuading the local tribes to take better care of their dogs has the backing of the Ethiopian Government as well as local doctors and vets.

For the captive breeding programme, as much as £200,000 will be needed, much of which will have to be raised outside Ethiopia. The Born Free Foundation (BFF) is in the forefront of the fund-raising efforts. Alison Hood, who handles the Ethiopian wolf project for the foundation, said: "We believe the best form of captive breeding involves animals being kept in conditions as close as possible to those they will confront in the wild and with minimal human contact." The Ethiopian wolves will be bred and reared in their natural habitat in Ethiopia before being released.

Starting with eight to ten wolves, it is hoped that the programme will quickly expand to replenish the population of Ethiopian wolves as soon as possible. If Dr Sillero-Zubiri succeeds in his task, the wolves will be saved for generations.

Leading article, page 19

Born Free Appeal

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If more than the £40,000 required for the gene sequencer is raised through this Christmas appeal, it will go directly to other vital prostate cancer research at the Institute of Cancer Research.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Exam stress drove pupil to suicide

A pupil at a private school gassed himself when the pressure of studying for A levels became too much, Ampthill Coroners Court was told. Wesley Davies, 17, drove home from Bedford Modern School and parked in the garage of his parents' home in Willington, Bedfordshire.

He left letters for his parents and for his friend, Louisa Knibbs, to whom he had confessed that he was finding school work hard. Verdict: suicide.

Rail strike

Services on West and Wales trains still face a strike threat on Friday in a productivity dispute. Industrial action by guards on South West Trains was lifted after the RMT union admitted that ballot papers were mistakenly sent to 20 former employees.

Driver killed wife

An elderly woman died when her husband accidentally ran over her, a Bradford inquest was told. Douglas Gott hit his wife, Frances, 67, while driving at about 6mph near their home in Shipley, West Yorkshire. A verdict of accidental death was returned.

Carried away

Sailors on *HMS Invincible* may not be home for Christmas. The carrier was due back in Portsmouth on Friday, but will stay in the Mediterranean until further notice to maintain pressure on Iraq. Crew members have been given free two-minute calls home.

Tongue lashing

The Government has launched a project to promote Gaelic and its traditions in Scotland, and links between Scotland and Ireland. The three-year Columba Initiative, costing £6 million, is also backed by the Irish Government.

Prank misfires

David Staniland, 19, a Manchester student, took a plastic toy gun into class for an end-of-term prank and told his tutor: "If I had got less that 40 per cent I was going to shoot you." He was cautioned after 20 armed police raided his flat at dawn.

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Tory leadership changes will go to historic vote

The men in grey suits have caught the democracy bug, reports **Andrew Pierce**

TORY MPs are to hold a formal ballot for the first time this century to settle the future of party leadership elections.

A decision was expected today on the changes to the election rules but it has been delayed until January by officers of the 1922 Committee of backbench MPs because of the divided opinion within the parliamentary party.

The notoriously autocratic executive of the committee has bowed to the demand for growing democratisation in the party. Most of the officers — the men in grey suits — have conceded that for the first time in the committee's 65-year history the changes will be put to the test by a series of votes rather than by the time-honoured route of agreement by acclamation.

With William Hague having pledged to give party members a say in leadership elections and policymaking for the first time, support has grown in the parliamentary party for a system of one member, one vote (OMOV). The move has dismayed the Tory old guard, which dominates the 1922 executive.

The MPs who back the principle of an electoral college are hopelessly divided on the percentage that should be given to party members. The options range from 20 to 35 per cent with 5 per cent for peers and MEPs.

In the past a consensus has been reached by popular acclamation. This has meant that Tory backbenchers have endorsed the executive's recommendations with a murmur, rather than a vote.

But with Mr Hague being determined to modernise the party, the officers of the committee have bowed to the inevitable. One senior Tory MP said: "For the first time a decision will not be reached by a puff of white smoke but by a democratic vote. We cannot bring in changes which are decided to democratise the party with a nod and a wink and no vote by backbenchers. Because there are no clear views, and increasing support for OMOV, many members of the executive have come to the conclusion that it cannot properly guage opinion as it has done in the past."

The committee will publish two policy papers outlining arguments for and against OMOV and the different systems of electoral college. Each MP will be given a ballot paper. The final question will be whether the MPs want to change the name of the 1922 Committee.

Several Tory frontbenchers, including Bernard Jenkin, Nigel Evans, Richard Ottoway and Timothy Boswell, have signed a letter to the 1922 executive supporting a change to one member, one vote. Others who signed include the former ministers Peter Bottomley, Robert Jackson, John Horam and Sir Peter Lloyd.

The subject of OMOV was raised with Mr Hague at a dinner of Tory MPs on Monday night. Mr Hague has stayed resolutely above the arguments over the leadership changes but is known to see some virtue in one member, one vote. The system would be used to portray the Tories as a genuinely democratic party. It would also reinforce Mr Hague's position as the grassroot supporters traditionally remain loyal to the leader of the day.

The letter, which was circulated by Mr Gray, MP for Wiltshire North, argued that changing to one member, one vote would democratise the party but ensure that MPs retained control over the slate of candidates. "It gives the parliamentary party the right to narrow the field to two or three candidates. It removes the possibility of a small group having disproportionate influence in the electoral college system."

Leading article, page 19

Labour rebels join Lib Dems

By Polly Newton
POLITICAL REPORTER

FOUR former Labour mayors of a London borough have joined the Liberal Democrats in protest at the Government's benefit cuts for single parents.

The four — Gerry Ross, Josh Lamb, Ken Hanson and Linda Hibberd — are Hackney councillors who split from their local Labour Party and joined the breakaway New Labour Group after a row last year over discipline. Mr Ross, 77, a Labour Party member for more than 60 years, said: "The cut to lone-parent benefits was the final straw. And it *wasn't only what they have* done to lone parents, which is absolutely disgraceful, but beyond that, the threat of the further attacks that are being planned on pensions.

"The Liberal Democrats are now the only left-of-centre party and I am delighted to become a member."

Ms Hibberd, who was mayor of Hackney last year, said that she could see little difference between the Government and its Tory predecessors. "They are carrying on with Tory policies and I'm very *unhappy about that.*"

Mr Lamb, who is the present mayor of Hackney, said: "I'm very angry about some of their policies on benefits."

John McCafferty, leader of the council's Labour group, said: "These people were expelled last year and have been doing everything they can to get back at the party ever since. All this about benefits is just a smoke screen."

"TAKE MY WORD FOR IT, YOU'LL END UP WITH A PULPIT AND NO CONGREGATION".

Hurd ridicules Cook's ethical policy 'nonsense'

By Nicholas Watt
POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

DOUGLAS HURD poured scorn yesterday on Robin Cook's ethical foreign policy and the video film used to present it after Labour's election victory.

Lord Hurd of Westwell, Foreign Secretary in 1989-95, warned Mr Cook against paying more attention to packaging than to substance and said that the video *would make his job over the* next few years harder.

The Labour leftwinger Diane Abbott asked for Lord Hurd's opinion of the video when he appeared before the Foreign Affairs Select Committee. He paused briefly before saying: "It's riveting stuff, but it's absolute nonsense."

Within weeks of the general election Mr Cook stamped his mark on the Foreign Office by insisting in his much vaunted mission statement that he would demand new standards on human rights. Preceded by a slick film of British achievements, the new Foreign Secretary said: "Our foreign policy must have an ethical dimension and must support the demands of other people for the democratic rights on which we insist for ourselves." Another video *on the same theme was* cheered at the Labour conference.

Lord Hurd said that it was difficult to apply consistent standards of human rights to different regimes. Returning to the video, he said: "Mr Cook has made his task slightly more difficult in conniving in such a video that was applauded so loudly at the party conference. He is making the next two to three years more difficult."

Ernie Ross, the Labour MP for Dundee West, asked him whether he wished that he had set out a mission statement in the style of Mr Cook. Lord Hurd replied: "Mission statements were invented after I had been Foreign Secretary. In my day they were called speeches in the House of Commons, but that's rather out *of fashion now.*"

Lord Hurd, who started his career as a diplomat, gave Mr Cook a gentle warning that he should use the restrained language traditionally deployed by the Foreign Office. He said: "There is a danger in too much rhetoric and in paying too much attention to packaging rather than to substance."

Why Treasury needs to relax its rigid grip

THE real nanny state is the one run by the Treasury. However much the Government talks about the importance of decentralisation, the Treasury remains determined not to surrender central control over spending. This will be underlined by the publication tomorrow of the Scotland Bill and has also been reflected *in the arguments* within Whitehall about how to finance the proposed elected mayor and assembly for London.

The Treasury still wants to fix overall levels of spending, so that local bodies would mainly just have discretion over the allocation of centrally fixed grants. Any freedom of manoeuvre over tax raising would be minimal. The Treasury acts is if any local variation from its spending targets might imperil its fiscal stability strategy. This is nothing to do with which party is in power and has been a consistent Treasury policy since the mid-1970s.

The Welsh assembly will merely decide how to allocate a Whitehall grant, while, in addition, the Scottish parliament will also have the power to raise or forgo £450 million which is the equivalent of 3p on the basic rate of income tax. However, not only will overall control over these tax-raising powers remain with Westminster, but there are inherent flaws in the so-called Barnett formula for determining the grant, roughly 97 per cent of total spending.

The 20-year-old formula ensures that Scotland and Wales receive a share of changes in spending for equivalent public services in England in proportion to their populations. This applies only to increases, not the baselines, with the result that Scottish spending per head is 23 per cent higher than in England.

Rather to the annoyance of Scottish ministers in the Government, the Commons Treasury Committee has recently inquired into the formula. Judging by its public hearings, the committee's report next Monday is likely to call for a revision of the formula on the basis of a new assessment of needs.

A Treasury paper last week pointed out that if local authority self-financed expenditure grows "more rapidly than equivalent expenditure in England over a period and in such a way as to threaten targets set for public expenditure as part of the management of the UK economy . . . it will be open to the UK Government to take the excess into account in considering the level of the block budgets". In other words, don't use your powers to spend, or we will claw it back. The same line was taken in the Government's consultative paper in July, *New Leadership for London*.

Within statutory requirements on councils to balance their budgets, the Treasury's insistence on restraining taxing and spending "undercuts local and regional autonomy". This "removes important issues from local democratic decision", as the Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR) pointed out last week in its thorough report *The Greater London Authority: Principles and Organisational Structure*, sponsored by the Corporation of London.

RIDDELL ON POLITICS

The central issue is whether the mayor and assembly should have their own additional revenue-raising powers. The IPPR report recommended that the new body should be allowed to levy transport related charges on congestion and additional parking, while also charging the utilities for road disruption. This sensible idea is opposed by the Treasury.

In most other countries, local and regional authorities can decide what taxes they want to levy, as well as rates of tax. Local discretion in America does not seem to cause Alan *Greenspan, the Federal Reserve* chairman, many sleepless nights. The problem about the "tartan tax", like the council tax, is not that it is too large but that it is too small a proportion of total revenue. Talk of reviving local government and devolution is largely empty unless it is accompanied by a genuine relaxation of Treasury controls.

PETER RIDDELL

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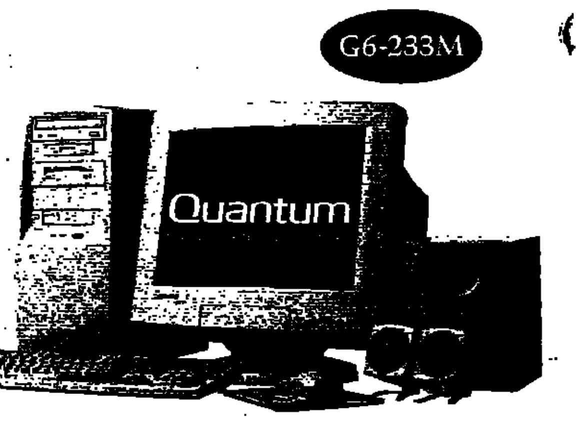

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Rescue summit gives little hope to Asian 'tigers'

Japan refuses appeals to shore up South-East Asia's faltering economies, **James Pringle** reports from Kuala Lumpur

A SUMMIT of the shell-shocked leaders of the crumbling former "tiger" economies in South-East Asia ended last night on a sombre note, with scant progress in solving the problems of the region's tumbling currencies, and with little in the way of economic assistance on offer.

Any nation that could help is looking anxiously at its own reserves and, no doubt, remembering slights sustained before at the hands of Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, the Malaysian Prime Minister, who seemed to have had the stuffing knocked out of him. "The economies of South-East Asia used to be vibrant and were described as miracle economies," said the visibly humbled and dispirited Dr Mahathir, speaking at the Palace of the Golden Horses, the conference centre.

The venue, which looks half-Las Vegas, half-Turkish harem, seems to symbolise the past decade of excess in South-East Asia, a vision of prosperity that looks like nothing so much as an extravagant dream.

"They [the economies] are no longer vibrant," admitted the Malaysian leader, who was once the scourge of the Western world, notably Britain, Australia and America. "They are no longer miracles." Dr Mahathir said he had learnt to temper his words, because everything he said had a direct effect on the currency market. But he continued to portray the South-East Asian nations as victims, noting that "when you are up against forces you cannot fight against, there is little you can do".

In a tone of resignation, the Malaysian leader said: "We have to accept that in this world there is no equality." He added: "Might is still right. We are not in a position to do anything; we are just the victims."

In the past, Dr Mahathir, 71, accused international speculators such as the financier George Soros, and a hidden "Jewish agenda", of being behind the meltdown. However, sources said that Dr Mahathir's deputy and anointed successor, Anwar Ibrahim, and Malaysian business heads had privately demanded that the Prime Minister tone down his words, because he adversely affected the value of Malaysia's currency, the ringgit, and the stock exchange. Yesterday the ringgit continued to fall.

Dr Mahathir, asked whether Japan — whose Prime Minister, Ryutaro Hashimoto, was present — had offered economic assistance, said Tokyo no longer saw itself as the "leading goose among the geese". Japan, whose economy is running at a snail's space, played down its role as an economic superpower; it offered no economic assistance but said it was ready to train 20,000 young people from the Association of South-East Asian Nations (Asean). President Jiang Zemin of China promised that Beijing would not devalue its currency which, if true, would help exports from South-East Asia.

China and Japan — the latter has even ruled out increasing imports from South-East Asia — only promised assistance through the International Monetary Fund, which has already put together a £61 billion rescue package for Indonesia, Thailand and South Korea.

TAMARA BECKWITH

Ines Misan, who insists she never agreed to marry the Wall Street trader

Millionaire sues lover for return of $500,000 gifts

FROM JAMES BONE IN NEW YORK

A WALL STREET wheeler-dealer who showered a Latvian model with gifts has taken the blonde to court in New York to get back the $500,000 (£306,000) he spent on her.

John Lattanzio, 49, one of Wall Street's most feared traders, is suing his former girlfriend, Ines Misan, who is in her twenties, for money he spent on what he says were engagement presents, including a 9-carat diamond-and-platinum ring he bought from Harry Winston the jewellers for $289,275.

The other gifts named in the court action are a Cartier diamond necklace ($147,220); a diamond ring from Van Cleef & Arpels ($20,026); a Hermes crocodile-skin purse ($27,000); and two more Harry Winston platinum rings (one diamond, the other ruby) that cost a total of $12,232.

The balding, divorced father, once named one of Wall Street's most eligible bachelors, claims the couple were engaged before they broke up last month. But Misan — who uses a single name for modelling — says "he loved me, but he loved me with obsession" and insists she never agreed to marry him.

He begged her to have his child, she told the *New York Post*, but he said: "You don't have to marry me."

She added: "This is an insult for him to ask me for the jewellery back. It's like giving a child a candy and ripping it out of his mouth once he's sucking it ... I get attached to gifts, especially diamonds. I'm a beautiful woman."

Misan, who once starred in a film called *In the Goldmine*, says the mogul sought to buy her affections from the first day they met. She estimates that he spent $3 million on her, allowing her to use his credit cards at will and buying her gifts almost daily because of his "own insecurity".

Among the other items he gave her were six large flowering orchid trees costing $2,000 apiece, a Tiffany ring and earrings, designer clothes and a Mercedes sedan.

Mr Lattanzio's lawsuit will probably turn on whether the court finds that he was in fact engaged to Misan. New York law says gifts "given in contemplation of marriage" — usually engagement rings — can be reclaimed.

With a court hearing scheduled for next Tuesday, Misan has hired the renowned divorce lawyer, Raoul Felder, and is fuming about her former boyfriend's behaviour. "It's not like this is his last penny," she said. "When you step out of the picture, you step out with style. He's not."

Mr Lattanzio refused comment.

French adore 'les rosbifs' but English disdain the 'frogs'

FROM BEN MACINTYRE IN PARIS

THE French are fond of the British in general and Britain's Prime Minister in particular, while the Britons have a much lower opinion of the French and almost no opinion whatever of their premier, according to a new French survey.

The poll, carried out by Sofres pollsters and published in *Le Monde* newspaper yesterday, suggests that while most French people may no longer consider Albion perfidious, the feeling is not quite reciprocated.

While more than 50 per cent of French citizens said they had a "largely favourable" view of the British, only 35 per cent of Britons felt the same way about the French and some 20 per cent declared outright "antipathy" towards our continental neighbours.

The gulf in political appreciation was still more marked. Some 82 per cent of French people said they had a "good" or "fairly good" opinion of Tony Blair, but just 11 per cent of British citizens had a similarly favourable impression of Lionel Jospin, the Socialist Prime Minister of France. A remarkable 82 per cent of Britons were indifferent to M Jospin and expressed "no opinion" at all on France's left-wing leader.

When asked to state the principal characteristics of French people, 43 per cent of the British cited "cultivation" and 19 per cent "creativity". Less flatteringly, however, only 8 per cent considered French people "resourceful" or "amusing", just 7 per cent pointed to "honesty" as a French trait and a tiny 4 per cent considered the French to be "courageous".

More than a third of the 1,000 Britons over 18 polled in the survey described French people as "arrogant", one quarter called them "cold and distant" and one in ten went so far as to label the French "greedy and hypocritical".

The French sense of *savoir-vivre* was identified by 70 per cent of Britons as the best aspect of French life.

French people, when asked to identify the best of British customs, opted for afternoon tea, the monarchy and pubs. The survey was jointly commissioned by *Le Monde* and the French television programme *Marché du Siècle* (Sale of the Century) which will tonight screen a programme entitled "Swinging London", exploring the question of why young French people are crossing the Channel in increasing numbers to find work.

☐ **Francs fall:** A gang of armed and hooded robbers yesterday attacked an armoured van on a motorway in the Paris suburb of Taverny, escaping with an estimated Fr10 million (£1 million) in cash. Several shots were fired during the hold-up and one of the guards was wounded. *(Reuters)*

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Mandela bows out with tirade against whites

Sam Kiley in Mafeking hears the President lament failure of reconciliation

NELSON MANDELA yesterday signalled a shift in African National Congress policy away from racial reconciliation to an attack on South Africa's "liberal" whites for their failure to participate in the economic and social transformation of the country. He also gave a warning that rightwingers were plotting to overthrow his Government.

In his valedictory opening address to the ANC's 50th national conference, Mr Mandela, who will resign as party president this week, said many whites "adhere to the openly racist proposition that a South Africa led by the ANC, and no longer under white minority rule, will inevitably sink into failure and disaster".

In an angry speech which took four hours to deliver, Mr Mandela said whites had defined national reconciliation, a central bedrock of ANC policy over the past three years, "as being characterised by such measures as would compensate the white minority for the loss of its monopoly of political power by guaranteeing its privileged positions in the socio-economic sphere".

He blamed widespread crime on a "counter-revolutionary network" which "bases itself on those in the public administration, and others in other sectors of society, who have not accepted the reality of majority rule".

This group aimed to encourage crime, steal money, arms and ammunition from the state, hide sensitive information from the police, and to build "intelligence machineries as well as armed formations".

The speech was arguably the most radical in Mr Mandela's career and had the hallmarks of having been written by his successor, Thabo Mbeki, author of most of the outgoing president's speeches, and who will be elected unopposed to the top party post this week.

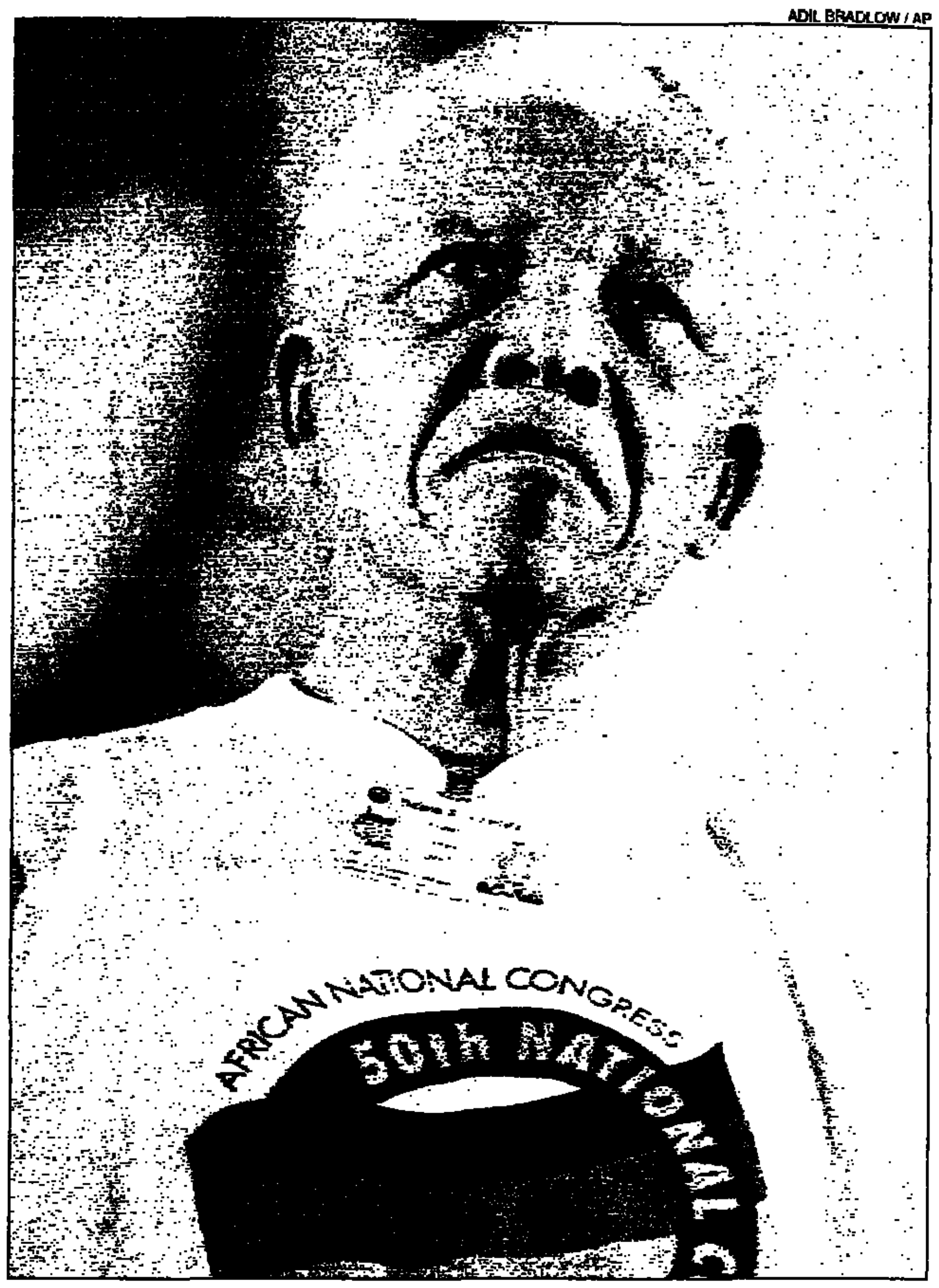
"The counter-revolutionary network ... is capable of carrying out very disruptive actions. It measures its own success by the extent to which it manages to weaken the democratic order," Mr Mandela said.

Mbeki: may have been writer of radical speech

Mr Mbeki is known to have raised the subject of the slow pace of economic change in South Africa with Tony Blair on a recent visit to London, where he complained of the complacency of many of the main South African corporations about a new order.

Mr Mandela's attacks on whites included a warning that, while the ANC no longer backed nationalisation, large companies were falling short of their "responsibility" to take part in the economic transformation of South Africa and that they would be expected to explain their business decisions. The media also came in for a drubbing from Mr Mandela, who was clearly preparing the ground for Mr Mbeki's presidency of the party in the run-up to the 1999 elections. "The bulk of the media in our country has set itself up as a force opposed to the ANC ... this media exploits the dominant positions it achieved as a result of the apartheid system to campaign both against real change and the real agents of change ... led by the ANC. The majority has no choice but to rely for information and communication on a media representing the privileged minority," Mr Mandela said.

ADIL BRADLOW / AP



Mr Mandela listens to the national anthem before the start of the ANC meeting

John Battersby, editor of the South African *Sunday Independent*, was dismayed by the attack. "This speech is going to be the party bible for the next two years. It is a very grim picture. There does not even seem to be a real commitment to a free and independent press, whatever his criticisms of it may be," he said.

But Mr Mandela spared no one in his speech, which was greeted with cheers from the 3,000 delegates who will decide party policy for the next three years.

Non-governmental organisations, universities, unions, and even parts of the ANC were dressed down for having failed to grasp the nettle of transformation and falling under the spell of white-minority interests. Some ANC members had fallen into the trap of "careerism", seeing their membership of the party "as a means to advance their personal positions", which had created ill discipline.

Reproaches born of frustration bode ill for democracy

BY SAM KILEY

NELSON MANDELA'S speech yesterday struck a chord within his own party, and many of his criticisms of whites were fair; but he revealed a new, intolerant face of the ruling party in the face of criticism, which bodes ill for the long-term future of democracy.

The results will be a nervous stock exchange, a weakening of the already feeble rand and investor jitters as South Africans and foreign analysts pick over his words for clues to future economic policy. They will find little to feed fears of a reversal by the ANC to the days when it advocated that the state should control the means of production. Mr Mandela's address was an expression of frustration by party leaders with the attitude of many whites that their responsibility for the future of the country ended when they "gave" the blacks the vote in 1994.

Party insiders said yesterday that many ANC leaders had been "shocked and insulted" by the refusal of the business sector to admit that it profited from apartheid when major corporations were asked to testify to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission earlier this year.

"No one is talking about nationalisation. But when those bastards said that apartheid had actually cost them money, and that they had been against it all along, most of us wanted to choke them. All they had to do was admit that they made money and had little choice," an ANC minister said yesterday.

The testimony of many groups at the commission over the past 18 months has clearly been monitored by the ANC and found wanting. Mr Mandela said evidence at the commission had revealed the "unwillingness of white society in general, including white politicians, business, the judiciary, the media and the Church, to explain its involvement in the maintenance and perpetuation of the apartheid system, and therefore its lack of readiness to make its own voluntary contribution to the creation of a truly non-racial and non-sexist democracy".

His vitriol was not merely reserved for whites but included an attack on the media and went on to show that, from now on, anyone who is not entirely *for* the ANC will risk being tarnished as "racist", "counter-revolutionary" and "reactionary". Such slurs may have been acceptable rhetoric in 1967. In a nascent democracy, they are not.

WORLD IN BRIEF

Red Cross calls on states for funding

Geneva: The International Committee of the Red Cross faces a record deficit of SFr58 million (£25 million) for 1997 (Peter Capella writes). Cornelio Sommaruga, its president, appealed yesterday to Western governments to face up to their duties as conflicts grow. He said: "If you exclude Britain, a generous supporter, you come to establish that countries such as Germany, France and Italy cover less than 2 per cent of our total needs." More than half of the contributions are now made on condition they be used in particular countries. The ICRC said the trend would hamper its operations.

Disney comes to life

New York: Tourists visiting Disney World in Florida got an unscheduled performance of *The Lion King* when a 400lb lioness escaped from a private zoo (James Bone writes). Nala, named after a character in the Disney film, escaped from the JungleLand when workmen entered her cage to build a platform to keep her out of the water left by torrential rain. Police said she was very dangerous. Although her claws have been removed, she still has all her teeth.

Abortion challenge by Pope

Rome: The Pope told the new US envoy to the Vatican, Corinne "Lindy" Boggs, 81, that abortion was a "deadly anarchy" that risked subverting the idea of justice cherished by America's founding fathers. In his first address to the Ambassador, the Pope took up the most divisive issue between the Vatican and President Clinton. *(Reuters)*

Whale-meat health scare

A new health scare has surfaced that could spell the end of Japan's love of whale meat (John Vincent writes). A report in *Neurotoxicology and Teratology* reveals that seven-year-old Faroese children whose mothers were exposed to methylmercury from seafood, mainly from eating the meat of pilot whales, have suffered significant neurological damage.

Kosovo jails Albanians

Belgrade: A court sentenced 17 ethnic Albanians to jail on terrorism charges in Serbia's Kosovo province. The defendants, whose terms ranged from four to 20 years, were charged with membership of the Kosovo Liberation Army, murder and attempted murder after attacks on policemen, police stations and refugee homes. *(Reuters)*

French bosses pick leader

Paris: The French employers' federation elected an aristocratic diplomat-turned-businessman to lead its crusade against the left-wing Government's plan to cut the working week in France to 35 hours (writes Ben Macintyre). Ernest-Antoine Seillière, right, was elected chairman of the CNPF (Conseil National de Patronat de France) by fellow bosses after an aggressive campaign in which he spoke of "destabilising" the Government.

Doctor caught by the tail

New York: A doctor was convicted of trying to extort £3 million from McDonald's by planting a fried rat's tail in a meal he bought for his son. But prosecutors discovered that it came from an albino rat, the same type of animal that Michael Zanakis, an associate professor, worked with in 1996. *(AP)*

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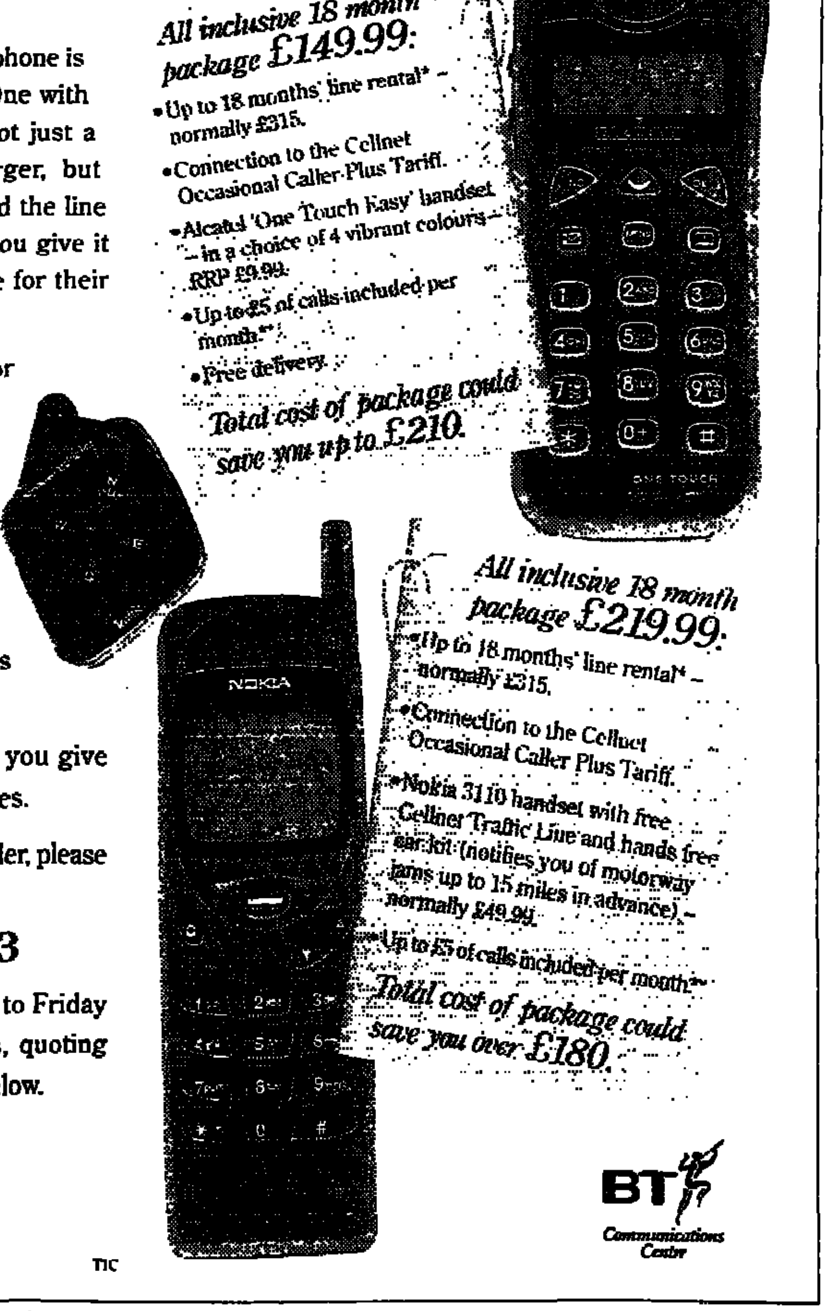


CHRIS WARDE-JONES

Art restorer Jarmila Polakova repairs a statue of Marcus Aurelius in the 500-year-old Palazzo Altemps which features, at right, a chapel. The gallery will house one of the finest collections of Roman art in the world

Treasures of ancient Rome restored to public view after half a century

From Richard Owen in Rome

AFTER a 13-year restoration costing £7 million, a 500-year-old Italian palazzo containing one of the finest collections of Roman sculpture and art in the world opened its doors yesterday.

Many of the works, from the celebrated Ludovisi collection, have languished in storerooms since before the Second World War and are being displayed for the first time in more than 50 years.

The restoration of the Palazzo Altemps, near Piazza Navona in the heart of Rome, comes after the reopening in June of the Villa Borghese and its art gallery after a similar long closure. Both moves are a triumph for Walter Veltroni, the energetic Deputy Prime Minister and Culture Minister, who vowed to wage war on "inertia, neglect and vandalism" in the state-run arts when he came to office last year. Yesterday he set "Anglo-Saxon" deadlines for restoration, with Pompeii and the Uffizi Gallery among his next targets.

The white marble masterpieces in the Palazzo Altemps — "like a patrician Roman's private gallery", as *La Repubblica* put it — will form part of "the world's largest archaeological museum", together with the National Roman Museum in the ruined Baths of Diocletian and the Collegio Massimo, due to reopen next summer. The sculptures, some restored by Bernini, include a 3rd-century sarcophagus carved from a single block of marble, with a bas-relief showing Romans fighting the Ostrogoths; a seated figure of Mars; *A Gaul committing suicide with his wife*, a companion piece to the *Dying Gaul* in the Capitoline Museum (both were reputedly kept by Julius Caesar in his villa garden to remind him of his victories in Gaul); an exquisite head of one of the Greek Furies (*Erinni*); and a colossal head of Juno or Hera — in reality a bust of Antonia Minor, mother of Emperor Claudius, three times life-size — which was once an obligatory sight on the Grand Tour. Goethe so admired it that he had two copies of it made, one for his house in Rome and one for his home in Weimar. "There are no words which can describe it," he wrote. "It is like a poem by Homer."

Fifteen of the pieces are from the original Altemps collection, formed in the 16th century but dispersed; other sculptures are now in the Louvre in Paris and the Hermitage in St Petersburg.

But the bulk come from the 17th-century collection of Cardinal Ludovico Ludovisi, nephew of Pope Gregory XV (1621-1623), which was also broken up. (The Ludovisi Villa in the Gardens of Sallust, near the present Via Veneto, was demolished in 1885 and the land sold for flats). The centrepiece is the Ludovisi Throne, depicting Aphrodite or Venus rising naked from the waves, held up by two maidens. Found near the Ludovisi Villa in 1887 and bought by the Italian state in 1901, it is thought to date from 5th-century BC Magna Graecia, though some scholars believe the throne and a similar piece in Boston Museum of Fine Arts are clever 19th-century fakes. Several other pieces from the Ludovisi collection, including a statue of Aphrodite and one of Septimus Severus, ended up in the Foreign Ministry, which has given them to the museum. A Ludovisi bust of Marcus Aurelius found in the Prime Minister's office has also been donated.

The Palazzo Altemps, used as a seminary from the end of the 19th century and then as a depository, was acquired by the state 15 years ago in a state of neglect, its elegant rooms partitioned and its frescoed walls painted over. Built in the 15th century, it was first owned by Girolamo Riario, nephew of Pope Sixtus IV (1471-1484).

Orphan requests parents as gift

By Richard Owen

A 15-YEAR-old Italian girl who has lived with nuns since her parents were divorced four years ago has advertised for "stand-in parents" over Christmas because she cannot bear the thought of spending the festive season alone.

Chiara, who describes herself as "friendly, with bobbed blonde hair", was 11 when her parents split up acrimoniously in Verona. She said in a handwritten letter to local newspapers that she had at first gone to live with her mother, but it was "hell" and she ran away.

She said she stayed at a series of orphanages until she was taken in by nuns at a convent near Padua, 35 miles from Verona.

Neither of her parents had made any effort to trace her, but "perhaps it is better that way, the divorce hurt me so badly". But she was "very depressed" after spending Christmas in institutions three years' running, and placed an advertisement in the local newspapers.

It read: "Special offer! — orphaned girl, very friendly, enthusiastic and affectionate, would pay up to £15 an hour to a married couple of between 40 and 45 years of age. Must be kind, modern, cultured people who would be willing to become part-time parents."

Newspapers which published the advertisement declined to give Chiara's surname or put inquirers in touch with her unless they were "genuine foster parents".

Homeless die as Moscow shivers in record freeze

From Richard Beeston in Moscow

MUSCOVITES yesterday were locked in a bitter battle with the elements, as bitter cold gripped the capital, causing deaths and injuries and forcing most people to stay indoors.

As temperatures fell to -30C, the coldest recorded December for nearly a century in the capital, hospitals reported a flood of victims, including 50 people suffering from frostbite and hundreds more admitted with hypothermia or fractures caused by slipping on the icy pavements.

At least nine people have died since the cold weather set in at the weekend, one when he was struck on the head by a giant icicle which fell from the top of a high-rise building.

Most of the victims, however, were from the ranks of the thousands of homeless and alcoholics in Moscow, who have little chance of survival unless they can find warmth and shelter for the night.

Certainly the city authorities seemed to have a strange sense of priorities. While insisting that animals in the Moscow zoo were carefully monitored and cared for, they showed little sympathy towards the homeless.

Andrei Varchena, a spokesman for the municipality, said that it was not Moscow's business to provide shelter for the destitute, many of them alcoholics. "They should live in houses not on the street," he said.

Fortunately, that attitude was not widespread. Although Russians are accustomed to freezing weather, the first cold snap of the year is always taken very seriously. Primary schools were closed yesterday and parents urged not to allow small children outdoors.

The elderly and sick were also warned to stay inside, not least President Yeltsin who is recuperating from a bad cold outside Moscow, where doctors reported his condition was stable but ordered him not to leave his sanatorium.

For the rest of the city, the residents were forced to carry on regardless. Motorists spent hours with jump leads trying to coax their reluctant cars into life. Traffic policemen continued their duties, and in a customary sign of hardiness, most refused to let down the ear flaps on their fur hats.

The Kremlin's guard of honour had their shifts reduced to one hour, even though the guard boxes, where they stand are heated from below.

Possibly the toughest Russians to emerge from this annual test against the elements are the *babushkas* (grannies) who man the stalls in the city's outdoor markets and can last for hours with only the occasional cup of tea to keep them warm.

Forecast, page 22

ALEKSANDR ZEMLIANICHENKO / AP

Icebreakers on the river in Moscow, where temperatures fell to -30C yesterday

Balkan blizzards bring snowfall chaos

From Tom Walker in Sarajevo

THE first snows of winter engulfed the Balkans yesterday, with most regional capitals experiencing sub-zero temperatures and chaotic driving conditions. Roadsides were littered with the customary casualties, with ageing Yugos and Zastavas particularly affected.

Thermometers dropped to -3C (26.6F) in Zagreb and -5C (23F) in Belgrade. Roads were treacherous in eastern Slavonia, the former UN-protected Serb stronghold now reverting to Croatian control. The heaviest snowfalls lay in an east-west belt, stretching from Vukovar and Osijek to Banja Luka.

Ironically, the blizzards arrived too late to save a ski event outside Sarajevo. Alberto Tomba, an Italian skier, had arranged a "slalom of peace" on mine-cleared pistes for early next week, but cancelled the event over the weekend amid warm weather. Sarajevans will now have to entertain themselves with the unscheduled visit of President Clinton.

Security preparations for his whistlestop tour were under way, with American helicopters making practice runs low over the city centre. The Nato Stabilisation Force said that, despite the freezing weather, military operations were continuing as planned.

☐ Bonn: When the German Army's brass band could not strike up national anthems at a formal ceremony yesterday to welcome Ukraine's Defence Minister, Olexander Kuzmuk suggested an old Ukrainian remedy to his German counterpart, Volker Rühe. He said vodka, liberally applied to both musicians and their instruments, was the best way to thaw out a frozen military band. The German band could not play because the keys of their instruments had frozen solid in the cold snap. *(Reuters)*

Slum dwellers suffer in India's chilly north

From Christopher Thomas in Delhi

SNOW in the Himalayan foothills has sent a chill throughout the northern Indian plains, driving urban slum dwellers to burn anything they can find — rags, leaves and old tyres — covering almost every city in smog.

There are cold-related deaths every winter in northern India because of poor nutrition. Huts made of mud and brick, the most common materials in the countryside, are thermally efficient in winter. But in the cities, ramshackle dwellings made of scrap material offer little protection from cold or heat.

There has been torrential, unseasonal rain in north India, adding to the misery. Parts of Kashmir are under snow, and Delhi temperatures are low for December

Eastern nations take Nato pledge

From Michael Evans in Brussels

THE three countries earmarked for Nato membership in 1999 passed the first challenge yesterday when alliance foreign ministers formally signed the accession protocols which will amend the 1949 Washington Treaty to allow Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary to join the security organisation.

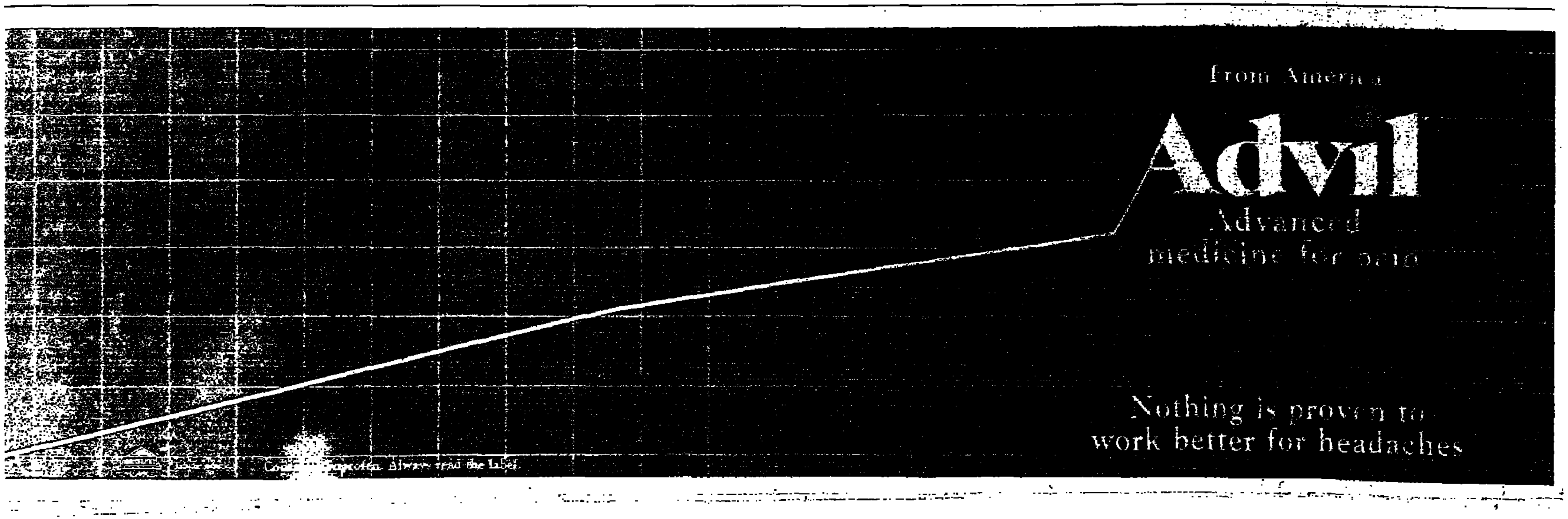
However, even as the ministers from the three former Warsaw Pact nations were welcomed by their alliance counterparts, existing member states set out their stall for the next wave of membership applications which could transform the security organisation into a family of 22 countries.

France and Italy spoke out for the inclusion of Romania. Slovenia and Bulgaria were also being referred to as the next in line for Nato membership.

However, Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary, speaking at a meeting of Nato foreign ministers, emphasised that it was too early to start naming countries for the next phase of the alliance's enlargement.

Yesterday in a moving ceremony at Nato headquarters, the foreign ministers of the three "first wave" countries pledged their full commitment to the alliance. Jaroslav Sedivy, the Czech Foreign Minister, described the signing as "a crucial moment for the Czech Republic". Mr Cook said: "We are now seeing the curtain coming down on the Iron Curtain."

Last night China criticised Nato's expansion and said it was a United States campaign as the world's sole superpower to dominate the global political stage and strengthen defence ties with Japan.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Venezuela falls for Miss Universe

A glamorous model says she can end the corruption of Caracas politics, writes **Gabriella Gamini**

CARLOS HERNANDEZ / REUTERS

Irene Sáez signing autographs during her campaign for mayor of a Caracas district in 1994 and below, being crowned Miss Universe in 1981

VENEZUELANS, weary of veteran politicians who are tainted by corruption scandals, appear to want a six-foot blonde former Miss Universe, who regards Baroness Thatcher as her "role model", as their next president.

Although Irene Sáez, 36, crowned Miss Universe in 1981, took up politics only six years ago she has emerged as the favourite candidate to win next November's presidential elections. The latest opinion polls show that the independent candidate, who has swapped her revealing dresses for sombre suits, is way ahead of her rivals, with 43 per cent of voters' support.

"I want to follow in the footsteps of Margaret Thatcher and revolutionise my country's political scene," she said in an interview with *The Times*. "I propose to lead with an iron fist, but wearing a velvet glove."

Carlos Fermín, an establishment politician and candidate of the ruling Copei party, trails her with 17 per cent support, while a former army general, Hugo Chávez, who has staged two violent coups, has 10 per cent support.

Señora Sáez has won the hearts of Venezuelans, even though she has yet to unveil her policies on how to alleviate abject poverty and curb high inflation. "My policies are a secret, I can't say," she told a press conference in Caracas recently.

Her campaign speeches are riddled with simplicities and clichés. "I am committed to Venezuela, where there is so much class division, so many struggles and injustices. I feel my people's suffering and think we have to humanise politics and the globalisation of the economy," she said in a speech. "I want to educate 1½ million poor people and clamp down on corruption."

Her campaign symbol is a Barbie Doll lookalike of her, sales of which have soared in the run-up to Christmas. Television stations in Caracas report that Venezuela has been struck by "Irenemania".

The male-dominated political establishment has so far fobbed her off as "politically naive".But her glamorous looks and her success in world beauty pageants remind some of them of the good old days when they lapped up profits from an oil boom in the 1970s.

The fall in world oil prices in the 1980s and decades of mismanagement have led to the present recession and inflation. The people, however, are avid fans of beauty pageants. The country has won four Miss Universe and two Miss World titles in 20 years and there are special academies for young girls training to be future Miss Worlds.

Señora Sáez, who turned to modelling at 16 but has also studied social sciences at Caracas University, proposes a move away from politics of the past which has seen President Carlos Andres Pérez being ousted from power in 1994 after accusations of corruption. Rafael Caldera, 82, the current President, has been unsuccessful in implementing free market reforms and is said to be ailing.

She claims to have proven her leadership skills with a successful four-year term as Mayor of the district of Chacoa, where she introduced her own police force and traffic wardens and reduced criminality and traffic congestion. But Chacoa is an elite district and her rivals say that her successes have not benefited poorer areas of the district.

They are also likely to accuse Señora Sáez of nepotism as her five brothers run her campaign. Señora Sáez has also had an affair with a banker who was among a hundred people forced to flee Venezuela after being accused of swindling investors.

☐ **Caracas:** Freddy Rojas Parra, 55, Venezuela's new Finance Minister, has less than a year to turn the economy around before presidential elections in November 1998. Presently, seven out of ten Venezuelans live in poverty, widening from six out of ten last year. The market-friendly industrialist, sworn in on Monday, pledged to cut spending, bring inflation under control, and boost productivity both in the public and private sectors.

Previously Trade and Industry Minister, he took over the job to defuse a growing political crisis between Congress and the Administration. The economy is expected to finish this year up 5 per cent followed by more than 6 per cent next year. *(Reuters)*

No room at the inn for the Pope in 1999

FROM CHRISTOPHER WALKER IN BETHLEHEM

THE Pope was informed yesterday by Bethlehem's new Roman Catholic Mayor that there will be no room at the inn if he wants to visit the West Bank town of Christ's birth for its ambitious millennium celebrations.

Launching Bethlehem 2000, the Palestinian self-rule town's $187 million (£117 million) millennium blueprint, at a meeting with foreign journalists, Hanna Nasser said: "I have advised, and I shall advise, the Pope to stay away if there is no solution to the political problem and an end of Israel's annexation of east Jerusalem.

"Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu is dreaming if he thinks that there can be peace in this region if the Palestinians do not get east Jerusalem as the capital of our state," he said. "Without that, no lasting peace is possible for Israel; no peace with the Palestinians, no peace with Jordan and no peace with Egypt."

The outspoken mayor, 61, revealed that he had given his message to the Pope — who had expressed strong interest in a Holy Land visit before 2000 — when the two men last met in Rome in September.

"There is no question that the Pope could pay even a private visit under the present circumstances where Israel is in occupation of east Jerusalem where the Holy Sepulchre, the site of Christ's crucifixion, is situated," Mr Nasser said. "As a head of state, he could not come here privately. My advice to him is stay away until there is a political solution."

Mr Nasser's surprise intervention two days before Yassir Arafat, the Palestinian leader, is due to unveil the Bethlehem 2000 logo at a special ceremony near to Manger Square wrecked hopes that all the leading Christian churchmen could meet here in a grand ecumenical gesture on or before Christmas Eve, 1999.

But the mayor — appointed by Mr Arafat despite Bethlehem's now overwhelming Muslim majority — told reporters that the Archbishop of Canterbury and other church leaders who were not heads of state were still "very welcome".

"The Archbishop does not represent a state, it is a completely different question," Mr Nasser said. "You cannot compare the position of any other religious leader and that of the head of the Holy See."

He claimed his objections to a papal visit were shared by leading Vatican advisers. He pointed out that, because of the sensitivity of the Jerusalem question, even Pope Paul VI — the last Pope to visit the Holy Land in 1964, before Israel's capture of east Jerusalem — had not crossed through the Mandelbaum Gate between east and west Jerusalem but entered Israel from the north.

Humans give boost to ostrich sex life

BY CHRISTOPHER WALKER

UNIVERSITY researchers in Israel have discovered a novel way of improving the poor fertility rate of farmed ostriches after observing that the birds were more attracted to their human handlers than to members of their own species.

Their find resulted in the creation of a bizarre type of ménage-à-trois arrangement in which the handlers remain on the scene without interfering with a sexual encounter between two of the flightless birds. As *The Jerusalem Post* disclosed on its front page yesterday, far from being a matter of entertainment "boosting ostrich reproduction is an economic issue, given that the country is now second in the world, behind South Africa, in ostrich-raising".

The project was run by Hebrew University experts and a professor from Gurion University in the Negev Desert. They found that fertility rates of ostrich eggs averaged only 50 per cent.

The researchers found that the reproduction of the bred ostriches under their observation could be improved by introducing a male and female who were attracted to their handlers, in the presence of one of the handlers. This technique, the academics reported, "enhances their sexual arousal".

As the ostriches involved in the experiment mated, the handler collected semen for later use in artificial insemination, which has proved "a more efficient and effective method" than natural reproduction.

US military in fresh battle of the sexes

FROM BRONWEN MADDOX IN WASHINGTON

A PENTAGON panel recommended yesterday that men and women should be separated during military training to avoid loss of discipline and calm fears of sexual harassment.

The special civilian panel said that, in the wake of sexual harassment and rape charges which have rocked the military, instructors now spent too much time worrying about relations between men and women and too little on basic training.

The recommendations of the 11-strong panel, appointed by the Pentagon, came as a surprise to service chiefs and were set to re-ignite the simmering controversy over women in the military.

President Clinton and defence chiefs have strongly backed the introduction of more women, in the face of loud opposition from congressional conservatives. The report is likely to be seen as a setback by advocates of women in the forces, who often use the prevalence of mixed training as a sign of progress.

If accepted, the recommendations would bring the army, navy and air force more closely into line with the Marine Corps, which has kept men and women strictly apart throughout training. It integrates them only after boot camp, believing that this removes distractions and helps women's morale.

The panel, headed by Nancy Kassebaum, a former Republican senator from Kansas, was set up in June by William Cohen, the Defence Secretary, after the high-profile rape and sexual assault cases at Maryland's Aberdeen Proving Ground.

The 27-page report also recommends that the services should do more to protect women from harassment and have more female instructors. It also says physical training standards should be raised across the board, to quell concerns of conservatives that women are subjected to less demanding tests.

Women have been steadily integrated into the armed forces over three decades and now make up 14 per cent of the 1.4 million in service. But the policy of combining men and women in training is less than five years old in the army and navy, although the air force has been experimenting with it for 21 years.

In the panel's view, instructors were so worried about new harassment charges that they spent much of their energy trying — often in vain — to enforce a policy of "no talk, no touch" between the sexes. Although the two sexes do not share rooms, they could often be stationed in the same barracks.

The panel is happy to see mixed training in the classroom and in the field. But it considers it essential that the smallest core units — army platoons, navy divisions and air force flights — should be single-sex.

Clinton names his new Buddy

THE speculation that has plagued America for a fortnight was finally brought to a close last night when President Clinton named his new chocolate Labrador puppy, Buddy (Tom Rhodes writes).

The Clintons, after what was described as a "high-level effort", were said to have chosen the name in part because of President Truman's famous observation "if you want a friend in Washington, get a dog", but also in memory of Buddy, a favourite family friend from Arkansas who died earlier this year.

Nanny faces life after 'Woodward defence' collapses

BY JAMES BONE

AN AMERICAN nanny has been convicted of first-degree murder for killing a child in her care after unsuccessfully trying the "Louise Woodward defence".

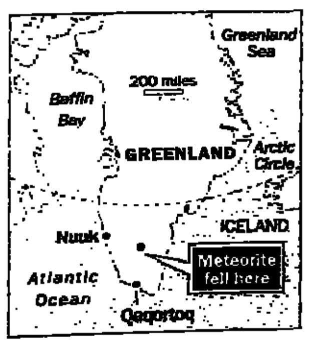
Donna Gist, 35, faces life imprisonment after a jury in Wheaton, Illinois, found her guilty of murdering Matthew Hendrickson, six, in January 1996 while the baby's parents slept upstairs. Gist, a licensed nurse who was hired to look after the boy for the night because he suffered chronic digestive problems, had argued at the six-day trial that the baby died because of earlier injuries — the same argument used by lawyers for the British au pair.

Scott and Kathleen Hendrickson, the boy's parents, testified that Gist was caring for their son in a downstairs bedroom when they heard a cry of hunger from the baby at around 3.30am. Mrs Hendrickson said she was going to get out of bed, but her husband convinced her to let the nanny take care of it. At 4.30am Gist ran upstairs and told the couple "something's wrong with Matty".

The prosecution said the baby had suffered a swollen brain and bleeding eyes characteristic of "shaken baby syndrome" while in the nanny's care. Gist's defence team, however, offered medical testimony casting doubt on the time the injuries were inflicted and suggested that someone else might have been responsible. They pointed out that Mrs Hendrickson had a history of depression and panic attacks, and had just undergone three weeks of intensive treatment at a local clinic.

The defence strategy paralleled that employed by lawyers for Miss Woodward, who was released last month with a sentence of "time served" after the judge overturned a jury verdict of second-degree murder and substituted a manslaughter conviction in the death of the infant Matthew Eappen.

Spotter planes scour Greenland wastes for 'Miss Smilla' meteorite



BY NIGEL HAWKES
SCIENCE EDITOR

DANISH Air Force planes were yesterday searching the icy wastes of Greenland for a meteorite believed to have struck the southern tip of the island a week ago.

Reports from fishermen, corroborated by videotape from a surveillance camera at a car park in Nuuk, capital of the territory, say that a flash, lasting two seconds, was seen early in the morning of December 9.

Bjorn Ericksson, first mate on the trawler *Regina*, said on BBC's *World at One* that he saw "a very strong light rolling down from the air. It was like a circle burning, a very strong light blue, and the air around the circle was very light green. The light disappeared in the mountains. It is something from space."

Seismometers recorded a ten-second shock, and there are also reports of a huge cloud of steam rising from the ice cap after the object landed.

The impact — if that is what it was — was at 63 N, 45 W, close to the settlement of Qaqortoq. From descriptions of the size of the steam cloud, some estimates suggest that as many as five billion tonnes of ice were vaporised, requiring a meteorite or comet which itself weighed a few million tonnes. "According to the accounts, the flash was so huge that we have good reason to believe that this is a giant," said Bjoern Franck Joergensen of the Tycho Brahe Planetarium in Copenhagen.

He said it was likely to be "a one-piece, solid meteorite" that crashed.

Professor Mark Bailey, director of the Armagh Observatory, said that he doubted the object was as large as first reports had suggested. The chances of finding anything depended, he said, on the speed of entry into the atmosphere. He speculated that the fireball might be linked with the Geminid meteor shower, which occurs annually at this time of year as the Earth passes through the trail of an asteroid called Phaethon.

If any solid material remained after the object landed, it would have been hot enough to melt its way through the Greenland ice cap, which would then freeze behind it. The search for a meteorite buried in the Greenland icecap formed the plot of the Peter Hoeg's bestseller *Miss Smilla's Feeling for Snow*. The meteorite is central to the conclusion of the novel. In a finale worthy of James Bond, its deadly contents become the subject of a struggle in a cave where it is secreted.

Christmas Day
25
December
"Thanks ever so much for the jumper..."

Boxing Day
26
December
"No, really, I do like it honest..."

New Year's Day
1
January
"So you're sure I don't need a receipt?"

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CHRIS HARRIS

Drill, fill and bill: one reason cited for overtreatment is that there are too many dentists chasing too few bad teeth; the ratio of dentists to the population is greater than ever

Paying through the mouth

Show the same set of teeth to a variety of dentists around the country and the diagnoses — and cost — of the work that needs to be done will vary dramatically. **Tony Dawe** investigates

"My name is Dave," said the young dentist, "and this is my nurse, Diane. Don't hesitate to ask questions."

This was just the reassurance I needed on my first visit to the busy practice in Birmingham's western suburbs. Dave's diagnosis was equally comforting: he recommended a visit to the hygienist to combat gum disease and warned me that a large molar on the top right-hand side of my mouth (Upper Right Six on his chart) might require a crown in a few months' time.

Four hours later, on the other side of the city, I was in another dentist's chair, receiving a more alarming verdict. Several fillings needed renewing, a new one was required on a front tooth and my gold crown had to be replaced.

The same teeth, the same city, yet two very different diagnoses: one that would cost £50, the other more than £400.

I had visited the dentists as part of a survey for *Reader's Digest*, to be published next month. I had similar experiences in other cities, with a clean bill of health from one dentist being followed by extortionate demands to repair my teeth from others.

I had begun by visiting my own dentist in Dorking, Surrey, who has looked after my teeth for 20 years, and two eminent dental professors. They all agreed I had some gum disease and needed to see a hygienist; otherwise everything was fine, although all three said Upper Right Six was a potential problem.

Yet as I travelled the country, presenting myself as a new patient requiring a thorough check-up at 22 practices in ten cities, I was told that several teeth needed new fillings, a couple required crowning and even that a wisdom tooth that was causing no harm should be extracted.

Some practices accepted me as a new National Health Service patient, others would take only private ones. The ratio of NHS and private dentists who wanted to do extensive work on my teeth was similar, at one in four, although the private practices charged more.

In the King's Road, Chelsea, I was quoted £430 for a check-up, clean, a filling and a crown. In Swansea, I could have paid more than £1,000 for the work proposed. In Plymouth, a private dentist joked after giving me a clean bill of health: "I'm sorry I can't take your money off you."

I had expected different opinions. My experts had warned me that some I visited might err on the side of caution and want to replace an old filling before it gave pain. But Professor Richard Elderton of Bristol University, who has written many papers on variations in dental treatment, says some diagnoses amounted to "obvious overtreatment".

"Some dentists belong to the old school of 'drill, fill and bill'," says Professor Elderton. "If they have 1,500 patients and do an unnecessary filling on each one, they earn an extra £15,000." He was also "amazed" by the advice to crown one of my teeth, saying it was unnecessary and would make the tooth more susceptible to disease, and thought *removing the wisdom tooth* was "unreasonable".

Two reasons are generally put forward to explain overtreatment. First, dentists working in the NHS have suffered government cuts in fees throughout the 1990s and have to make up the money somehow. A surge in demand for dental treatment at the *start of the decade blew the* NHS budget and led to a cut in the Government's contribution to treatment costs — and subsequent increases below the rate of inflation.

"Dentists get 40p more for an NHS check-up today than they did in 1991, even though *costs have risen*," says *Kate* Cinamon, press and parliamentary manager at the British Dental Association (BDA).

The second reason is that too many dentists are chasing too few bad teeth. The Dental Practice Board (DPB), the government body responsible for supervising the finances and probity of NHS dental care, *reports that the ratio of* dentists to the population is greater than ever. The number on the UK dentists' register last year was 28,505, and is expected to rise to 30,000 by the turn of the century.

When the NHS was created, the number was half that. Over the past 50 years the state of the nation's teeth has improved *dramatically*. Recent surveys show a significant decrease in tooth decay in children and fewer adults who have lost all their teeth.

These statistics are not disputed by the profession but it refuses to accept the findings of surveys such as the one for *Reader's Digest*. The BDA suggests that differences of opinion between dentists are not unusual, and that one cannot apply "a right or wrong to what is in the end a matter of professional judgment".

If the patient is a regular attender, the BDA argues, then it may well be in the patient's interests to keep a tooth with a small hole under observation. On the other hand, with a patient attending for the first time, it might be in the patient's interests to err on the safe side and treat anything that is wrong.

The DPB has been reviewing the way it investigates fraud and abuse in NHS treatment. The board's dental reference officers carried *out* more than 50,000 random examinations of patients last year and had minor disagreements with the treatment prescribed in nearly half the cases. Only 3 per cent of these examinations, however, indicated real cause for concern.

Those unhappy with private treatment have nowhere to turn except the civil courts. Private dentistry is a free market, with few controls. The BDA recognises that this is unsatisfactory, and has joined a campaign to introduce a *statutory complaints procedure*. Frank Dobson, the Health Secretary, is being urged to change the Dental Act to ensure that private patients have proper recourse to justice.

"The most important thing is to assess the risk accurately in the first place," says Professor Elderton. "More dentists must put prevention before cure and realise that filling and crowning teeth can in the long term create more problems than they solve." And patients should retain that degree of cynicism reserved for judging other service industries. If your teeth haven't bothered you and the dentist recommends a lot of work on them, refuse. Then seek second and third opinions.

● Can You Trust Your Dentist? *Reader's Digest, January 1998, £1.90*

Nigella Lawson

Call off the dogs, Tony

HAS it come to this so soon? It is, as the song doesn't quite go, a long time from May to December, but even so it is rather too soon for the corrosion of paranoia to have set in.

At best, it is unseemly for government whipping boys to be coming on strong with the *Today* programme — giving a warning, with the prissy locutions of stage gangsters or Ealing comedy trade unionists, of "suspending co-operation" — and at worst it shows a terrible lack of self-confidence combined with the sort of arrogance that can unseat even those who feel firmly ensconced.

For God's sake, it took the Thatcher Government *years* to get to this stage. It hardly reflects well on the Government that it has made the journey in a matter of months. But I'm not surprised at the collective jumpiness. We know from experience that we are most sensitive to the criticism of others when we know, in our hearts, that we have behaved badly ourselves.

If the Government — or its director of communications — feels so strongly that Harriet Harman was prevented from *getting her message across* last week on the *Today* programme, might it not be because, deep down, there has been a governmental disinclination to come clean about what that message is?

One of the reasons why the Government found itself on sticky ground last week over the lone-parent benefit cuts is *that it lied about* why they needed to be made. It put forward a dishonest reason: the penny-pinching one. Uncomfortable ministers, MPs and officials blah-blahed their way through the old mantras about difficult choices, painful decisions: money had to be clawed back; if there were other ways of doing it as well, *then the Government would*. Worse: the Government shamelessly tried blaming the *last* Government for it, pretending that the Labour administration was bound to take on measures instigated by the Tories.

Naturally, the arguments didn't hold up very well — and they must have known it. When you're talking about making a saving of £50 million for the next year, it soon becomes apparent that such sums could easily be recouped elsewhere if it were just a case *of money*. But it is about ideology — and why fight shy of that? Tony Blair does not want to go on supporting the dependency culture; Gordon Brown is obsessed with the work ethic. *In neither case is* that anything to be ashamed of.

But the difficulty is, one dishonesty leads to another. Harriet Harman's insistence that single mothers would end up better off just could not be the case. I understand why that line has to be taken — it would hardly look good to tell *the truth, which is that no one minds how much this* generation of single mothers suffers as long as it puts off the potential next generation. But as someone who knows how difficult it is to find high-quality, *unaffordable* childcare, I do wish she would stop invoking so freely and meaninglessly the prospect of high-*quality, affordable childcare*.

But for all that — and the undemocratic grumblings of the government communications man aside — we shouldn't be sorry that the honeymoon is over. I don't say this because I wish to see the current administration embarrassed for its own sake. I take the unfashionable and, *for a journalist, somewhat* embarrassing view that Tony Blair is a good man, capable of leading a good government; but dissent is an integral part of government.

The modern obsession with splits and disunity, the insistence that they are a political ill, is indicative of our intellectual and moral flabbiness. An *argument that can't withstand* criticism is not an argument worth making. And if Tony Blair were really as unable to bear conflict as his henchmen make out, I don't believe he would occupy the position he now does.

Season's bleatings

WE LIVE in an informal age, and that isn't necessarily a bad thing, but formal practices need to be treated accordingly. If I get one more Christmas card signed "love, Jane", or "all the best from Richard and family", when patently neither comes from close friends, I will lose it.

I waste hours working out who sent the cards in question: the practice has the time-consuming properties of the crossword puzzle and the jigsaw, but with few of their satisfactions. At most I end up feeling feebly guilty that, for another year running, I haven't reciprocated.

Actually, that's not true: I just feel I should feel guilty. But I do feel rattled. At least this year, I've bought the cards. Since they're *from the* Royal Marsden Hospital, I console myself with the fact that I've managed to make my charitable contribution, even if I have failed — yet again — to discharge my social duties by sending them.

Bone of contention

A RATHER grand English don at Oxford said to me — shortly before I went up and was extolling the wonders and rigours of the general paper — *that she longed to see it* abolished.

There was only so much she could take, she said, of know-it-all adolescents writing essays about civil liberties, basing their pompous arguments on freedom-depriving iniquities of the imposition of car seatbelts (which just about date-stamps me).

But even bearing her sharp point in mind, I *do* feel my freedom to be significantly curtailed by the ban on meat on the bone. Sounds silly perhaps, and I am aware there *are more important things* to worry about, but it surely matters. (In truth, I admit I mind more on culinary grounds than moral ones, but in real life the practical is not inferior to the theoretical, so I don't apologise too much for that, either.)

There are two lines to take here: either the problem is much worse than we're being told, in which case we should be given information rather than being protected by insufficiently explained decisions; or this is a panic measure that serves no use except to make Jack Cunningham feel that he is behaving decisively. But even if we plump for the latter, there is something of the Sergeant Bilko about it all. I cannot help but imagine Phil Silvers striding into a calm room clapping his hands and shouting "Don't panic! Don't panic!"

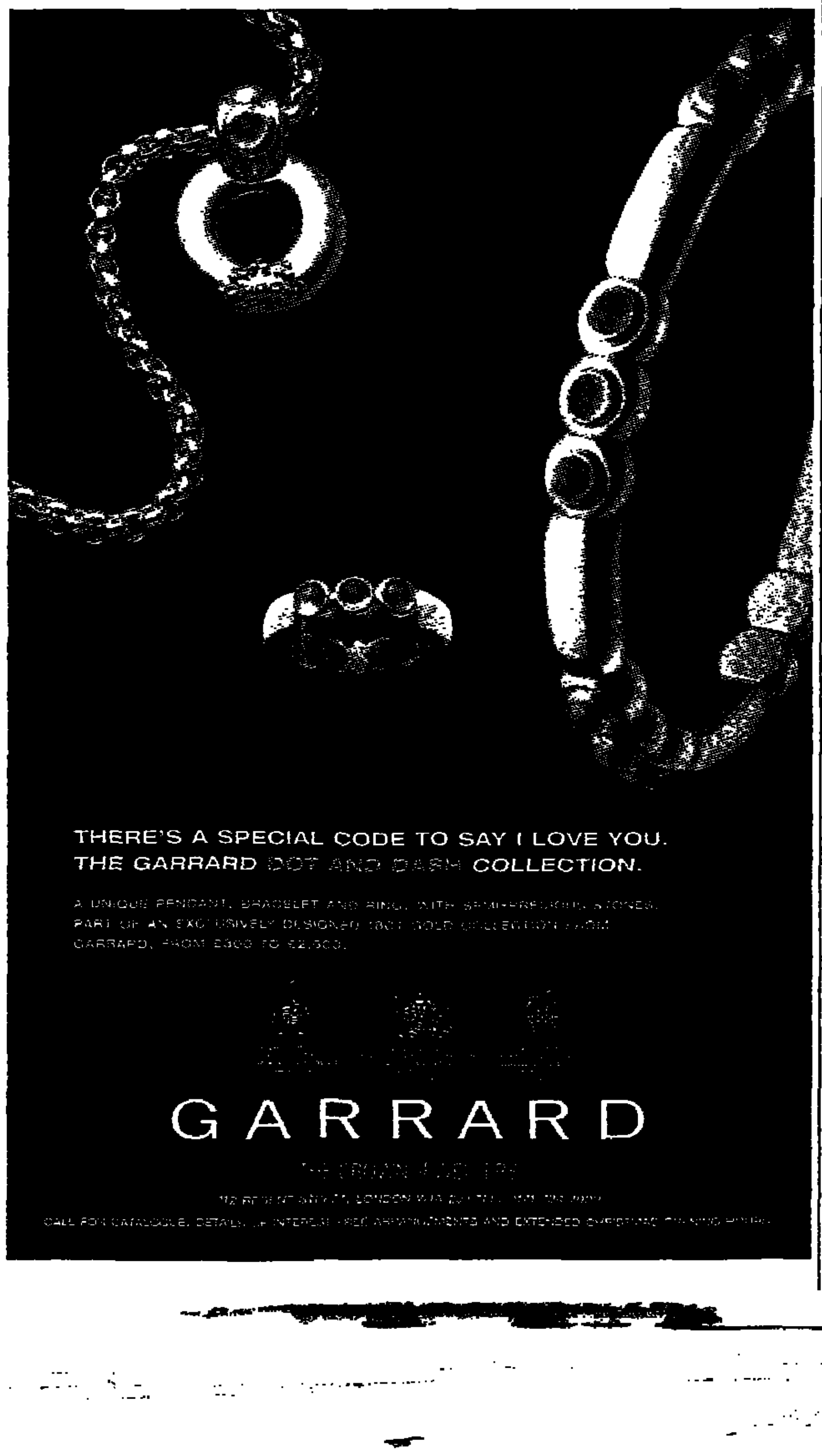
But anyway, the decision has been taken, we were not consulted and it is too late now. But this, surely, is significant: usually when health scares erupt, the public *overreacts*.

In this case, it is — we have — done the opposite. My butcher told me that as soon as Jack Cunningham announced the impending ban of meat on the bone, he was overrun with demands for oxtail and rib of beef. Before midnight on Monday, he could not sell enough; the demand was furious — and understan*dably so*.

Now, does this seem to you to be a case of people who want protecting? I am all for the regulating of the meat industry: I don't want meat *that is* disgustingly reared or poisonously fed, and I certainly don't want cover-ups. But this decision doesn't make me feel looked after. It makes me feel anxious. What is going on — and why?

ARTS

Richard Cork picks Christmas books for discerning art lovers. Pages 30-32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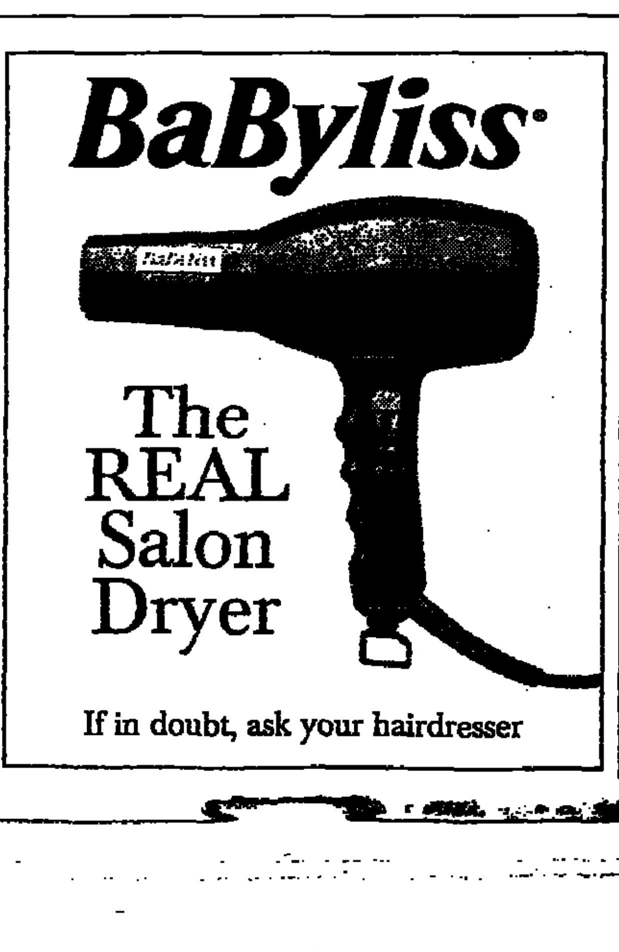
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هكذا من الأصل

Dear Santa, read my printout

Tom Rhodes reports from the American stores where children are licensed to choose, while in Britain **Jill Parkin** urges parents to fight the click-on, payout spirit of Christmas

Aubrey Keech, a ten-year-old American of discriminating tastes, made straight for the Lego interstellar starfighter and pointed his laser-controlled gun at the bar code on the side of the box. After the familiar bleep, he ambled towards the *Star Wars* collection, casually firing at a Tamagotchi electronic pet en route.

G.I. Joe was next, then the Galactic Battle game and the remote-controlled car by Hasbro. Catherine, his mother, followed while Austin, eight, her younger son, tried unsuccessfully to wrest the gun from his sibling's tight grip.

The Keech family were in Toys 'R' Us in Rockville, Maryland, where they were taking advantage of the gift register recently set up in the chain's American stores. As Aubrey zapped each toy, his choice of gift was picked up by the store's computer, enabling the manager to present his mother with a printout of the 15 gifts her son hopes that he will be bought this Christmas. Prices in his list ranged from $79.99 to a more conservative $3.99.

Already thousands of children have registered their wish-list with the computer, enabling friends and relatives to use any branch to buy a present they know will meet approval. It is perhaps the ultimate symbol of the consumer society that American stores have initiated the "wedding list" for children.

> 'One girl seemed to want every toy in the store'

"Aubrey's list was quite short by the standards of some people who have been here in the run-up to Christmas," says Greg Bibbs, a manager at the store. "We had a girl in here the other day who seemed to want almost everything she saw. Her list ran to six pages."

The gift register, used only under the watchful eye of parents, itemises names of toys, prices and availability. As soon as a toy has been bought, the computer erases it from the list. Parents can add or delete items at their discretion, screen out toys deemed inappropriate — such as the Mortal Kombat video game which many find too violent for younger children — and exercise control over birthday presents.

In an age when children's wishes are increasingly driven by the commercial marketing of television shows and blockbuster films from Hollywood, this novel concept reduces the headache of post-Christmas or birthday returns. It also offers older relatives a window into the "must-have" toys of the moment.

This year, the most popular toys in the United States include the Sing and Snore Ernie from *Sesame Street*, the purple and pink cordless phone from the film *Clueless* and the *Spiderman* web blaster.

Only a relative who tirelessly watches children's television could possibly be aware, for example, that the Rapunzel Barbie, golden locks almost touching her feet, is the only Barbie in vogue this Christmas.

But there is an obvious downside to such instant gratification. By hijacking a role traditionally reserved for Santa Claus, the company has also ruled out any element of surprise. Critics argue that the principle of the Sapphire laser gun, developed from techniques normally used for stocktaking, is a particularly crass method of appealing to both the greed of children and the laziness of adults.

"It suggests in some way that parents don't talk to their parents about what the children want," admits Mrs Keech, a nurse who frequently visits the Rockville emporium on behalf of her two sons and their six-year-old sister. "I think it's probably a more useful tool for parents who want to keep track of what their children want or should be allowed to have."

The marketing benefits, of course, are obvious. Department stores and shops are desperate for any edge on the competition, and Toys 'R' Us is gradually creating a databank which cleverly accumulates business up and down the country for Christmas, birthdays and the many other holidays celebrated in the United States.

What the sinister side to the gift register demonstrates is a gradual cultural shift in America and, to a lesser extent, in Britain. Rites of passage toys, such as dolls' houses or Meccano construction kits, that once signalled a certain coming of age, are in decline.

"There was a time when a toy mattered in terms of the relationship between parent and child or grandparent and child," says Gary Cross, an historian at Penn State University and the author of *Kids Stuff: Toys and the Changing World of American Childhood*. "What has happened is that over the years, the culture of children and adults' memories of their own childhoods have grown further and further apart."

Mr Cross says electronic lists have the effect of dividing children and adults even more, as the register denies any need for negotiation between parent and child. Nowhere is that gulf more apparent than amid the rows of stocked shelves at Toys 'R' Us, a chain of suburban warehouses filled with electronic games, Hollywood spin-offs and other mass-produced merchandise. The company's showrooms have none of the charm of Hamley's, the famous New York toy shop F A O Schwartz, or the earlier and smaller independent stores.

Most of the mothers making the pilgrimage to Rockville clearly viewed the shopping expedition as they would a trip to the supermarket. That their children can now define wishes in such stark terms not only reinforces the commercial nature of the American Christmas, but it also eliminates the need for children to learn the simple lesson of gratitude.

But for Austin Keech, already addicted to computer games, the laser gun is like manna from heaven.

"It's a dream come true. It means we don't have to write lists any more," he says, attempting to persuade his mother into another extensive trawl of the store. But Catherine Keech declines to engage any further with this latest of American dreams, recognising it for what it is: a weapon designed for children but targeted firmly at adults.

MICHAEL ABRAHAMS/NETWORK

There is a sinister side to the gift register, which demonstrates a gradual cultural shift. Rites of passage toys that once signalled a certain coming of age are in decline

Goats – the alternative gift

Give a Mongolian a goat this Christmas

HOW about solving your Christmas gift problems one goat at a time?

There is a trend in America, suddenly widespread this year, towards charitable gift-giving that shuns presents of conspicuous consumption. Instead, it suggests hot lunches for 50 Ethiopian children, a goat for a Mongolian family or a share in a water buffalo for a Cambodian village. Your relatives and friends are left with a card and a memento under the tree, telling them that the gift has been purchased in their honour.

A glossy catalogue from the Heifer Project lists the prices, most of them quite modest, and pictures happy Third World recipients. Another organisation, World Concern, equates the gifts most of us expect to receive with what they could mean to those mired in poverty. Thus the cost of a new CD could provide a week of hospital care for a patient in Uganda, a Tommy Hilfiger shirt could stock a fishpond in Bangladesh, and for the price of an expensive handbag you could fund a small business loan in Haiti.

"HERE is a creative way not to buy more stuff," says Paul Kennel, the president of World Concern. The Heifer Project requires that offspring from its animal gifts be given to neighbours. In this way, the benevolence keeps on growing. Already, 105 rabbits that were given to four Chinese families in Sichuan have grown to 40,000, passed on to another 2,000 families. More corporations are quietly making donations to worthy causes instead of giving drink or food baskets to their clients at Christmas, according to Wendy Liebmann, who runs WSL Marketing in New York.

L'Oréal, the French cosmetics company, gives generously to Women in Need to help homeless women and children. Revlon donates to breast cancer research. Ms Liebmann says: "With the economy doing so well, there is a growing sense of wanting to give something back to those less fortunate."

IAN BRODIE

● *World Concern, 19303 Fremont Avenue North, Seattle, WA 98133, US, telephone 001 206 546 7201; Heifer Project, PO Box 808, Little Rock, AR 72203, US, telephone 001 501 376 6906*

How to fight wish-list greed

This Christmas could be the last one for Santa Claus. If Toys 'R' Us brings its wish-list to Britain — and, needless to say, the chain's mandarins are thinking about it — what child will believe that the old man in his red dressing gown is computer-literate, online and surfing the Internet?

If they do, six-year-olds will spend Advent Saturdays zapping the toys they covet into a toyshop computer. Only the bravest will admit to writing Father Christmas a letter and watching Mummy post it up the chimney. Not much playground cred in that.

Be warned. Nial Forth, press co-ordinator of Toys 'R' Us, says: "The wish-list is something we're looking at for over here next year." Once click-on greed arrives from America, the child who can't sleep on Christmas Eve because he can really and truly hear jingle bells will be replaced by a human calculator kept awake by dreams of avarice. Action Man and Nintendo games.

You may think it couldn't happen over here. Yet there are already parents out there paying £60 for a £10 Teletubby. Undeniably Laa-Laa, but very likely to grant their children a wish-list next year. It's child power at its worst. All parental control will be lost. How many pink and purple Polly Pockets can I take without wanting to drown myself in a butt of cherryade?

All I want for Christmas . . . can be found on my computer wish-list from Toys 'R' Us

This year, as usual, I'm rigging everything for our three children via telephone calls to grandmas and aunties. Next year I may have to train Puppy in My Pocket to eat all the Pollies my six-year-old daughter, Rosie, would zap on to her wish-list given half the chance.

So you'd like to limit your son's arsenal? You'd like your daughter to think more than pink? No chance with a wish-list. Mind you, you could use all his swords, laser guns and tanks to decimate her hordes of Barbies.

With a shopping list drawn straight from television advertisements, they are not going to be clicking on a packet of 12 coloured pencils and coloured paper.

The books, the jigsaw puzzles, the Fuzzy Felt — all the presents that might actually make it as far as the twelfth day of Christmas — will be the great unzapped.

They will go for the things they lose interest in before the first battery has worn out. They'll go for all the hyped stuff, like those nasty Spice Girl dolls.

How Posh is someone whose plastic representation wears next to nothing and is seemingly thumbing a lift? And do you want her in your house? Your small daughter probably does. Click-click. That's boring old feminist Mummy on the Spice rack.

Children should actually be kept out of toyshops. If we're still solvent after Christmas, it will be because ours forget about 80 per cent of the things they've asked for over the past few weeks. Fat chance of that with banks of computer memory keeping their whims alive.

Why are we so keen on giving our children total gratification? Let's not psychologise this one. It's just a lot of greedy toymakers who want to take us for a sleigh ride.

Forget kindliness. Forget looking for a present that might surprise and delight a child. Click on and pay out. That will be the spirit of Christmas.

Forget gratitude. With a wish-list, Christmas morning can only ever be a disappointment. If you've zapped a whole menagerie of cyber pets, one beeping fish is rather small-scale. Hardly worth a thank-you letter. But perhaps Toys 'R' Us, with its computerised information on buyer and receiver, could start a profitable line in those, too.

Christmas has long been commercial: gold, frankincense and myrrh don't come cheap. But until now it has always had charm and surprise. Now Father Christmas, who has survived central heating, and beard-pulling in Arndale centres around the country, may not see the millennium unless we, the parents who haven't yet gone laa-laa, act.

Wish-lists should be boycotted. Requests to Santa should be made by letter or when stirring cakes and puddings. Mince-pie crumbs and sherry dregs should be in evidence on every hearth on Christmas morning.

What's more, I shall further tackle this click-on greed with the revival of an old Christmas tradition: the silver-foiled tangerine in the stocking. Whoops of childish glee will be compulsory.

JILL PARKIN

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Don't fix our constitution — it's bust

Anthony Barnett says the nation is more revolutionary than Blair

A peaceful but profound constitutional revolution is under way in Britain. However, its initiators, Tony Blair and his chief foreman, the Lord Chancellor Derry Irvine, are treating it as so much dirty linen to wash indoors. This is odd. For it is *the one part of the Government's* programme that has so far sparkled with unblemished success.

The speed and extent of the Government's achievement is remarkable. Constitutional reform has become a monthly occurrence. This month saw a White Paper outlining a Freedom of Information Act, delivered despite vigorous opposition. In May Gordon Brown announced the effective *independence of the Bank of* England, something Nigel Lawson had argued for, calling it "a far more useful constitutional reform than any advocated by Charter 88".

In July the Government published its Green Paper on London, promising the capital a *directly elected mayor* — a constitutional reform of unprecedented radicalism. In August the Prime Minister put himself at the head of the most far-reaching modernisation of the monarchy this century, as he sensed the likely response to the death of Diana, Princess of Wales.

In September referendums on a Scottish parliament and a Welsh assembly were held and won. In October the *Human Rights Bill was pub*lished, to incorporate the European Convention on Human Rights into our law. Long resisted as inimical to our traditions, it will empower judges and give residents of the UK their rights in court.

In November, the Jenkins *Commission was established* to propose a more proportional system of voting in general elections. A referendum is likely and may alter permanently the dynamic of British politics.

So far only one aspect of the joint pre-election Labour and *Liberal Democrat list of com*mitments has been reneged upon. This is the promise of a statement of principles. The Lib-Lab joint declaration concluded that a "common thread" ran through its proposals, that of "empowering the people". "The new *Government," it stated, "should make* an early declaration setting out the principles behind its programme of constitutional reform and outlining the more open and modern democracy it seeks to create." Instead, Lord Irvine of Lairg has rejected such a declaration as a *mere* "piece of paper" and exposed the Government to the Tory charge, pressed by William Hague, that it is without values and principles.

Some ministers (a notable exception is Gordon Brown) dismiss the case for any such principled guide or statement of aims. Tony Blair may have said that Britain needs "a new constitutional settlement to express the new relationship between individual and society, citizen and State, for the world today". But that was before he became Prime Minister. Now Labour ministers feel they are proceeding in a good old pragmatic fashion, keeping the process under control and changing the con*stitution in the piecemeal way* that it has always been reformed.

Few judgments could be more mistaken. Reforms under the old constitution were prophylactic: intended to head off calls for further change. By contrast, Pandora *has breathed on each of* Labour's initiatives.

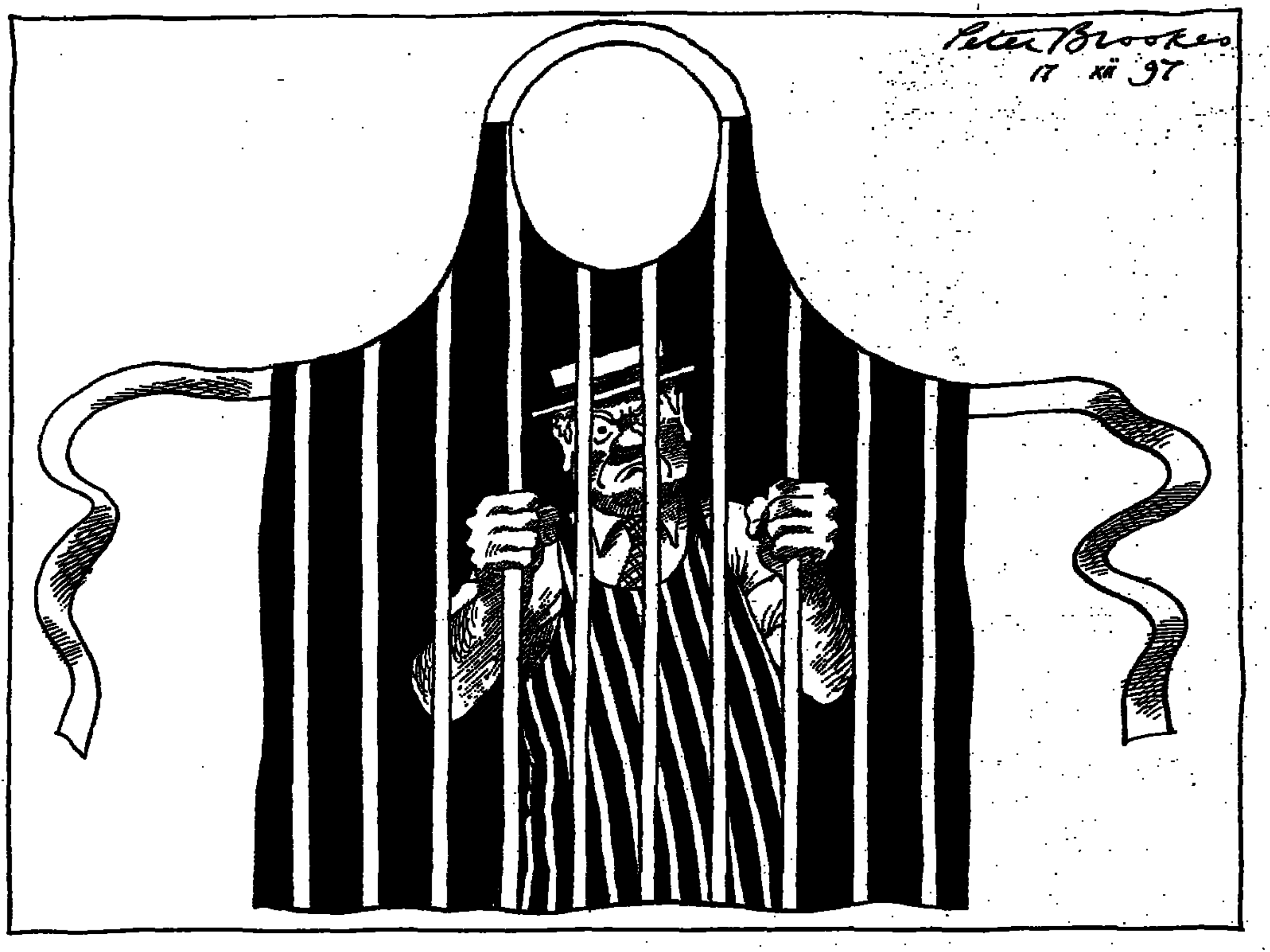
The Scottish legislation will inflame the English question. The London mayor will inspire a *dynamic of regional* demands. Incorporation of the European Convention has already triggered a debate on the individual's right to privacy versus the rights and freedom of the press. The reform of the Bank of England has led the Treasury Select Committee *to demand the power to make* an appointment to the new Monetary Policy Committee. And there is more of the same to come, not least when reform of the Lords begins in the next year or two. The forces of change are being amplified, not diminished, by each new *measure;* and they are all rendered more dynamic by the field force of the European Union. Instead of the familiar process of amelioration, drawn out over decades, a cataract of initiatives will soon sweep away the old constitution.

One reason why this has happened is that the old constitution is well and truly bust. Its advocates' will to resist is spent. Even more *important has been an historic* change in popular opinion. This was manifested in the May election, which was less an endorsement of Mr Blair than a rejection: first of the Major Government, and secondly of what I have termed "Great Englishness" — name*ly the ideology of Margaret* Thatcher and Enoch Powell. Many Conservative candidates expected to improve their showing by flying its colours. Instead, for the first time since the "rivers of blood" speech in 1968, Powell's once riveting influence withered at *the polls.*

Recently, one member of the Government said to me: "Of course people support reform, who wouldn't?" But ten years ago they did not. The core of Great English populism was the *defence of our unique institu*tions. In the 1970s, referendums in Scotland and Wales were lost. In the 1980s the GLC was abolished quite easily. Voter belief in the system was high. The thrust of anti-European rhetoric in 1997 was based on the assumption that *people still love the old institu*tions and don't want them changed.

That love has died. The public mood is not Jacobin. It wants practical outcomes, not confrontation. This, however, is a sign of its maturity, not its conservatism. Mr Blair has called for a modern Britain. The country is ahead of him and now has a settled desire for democracy, one that will eventually find its expression in written constitutional words.

The author was the founding director of Charter 88. His book This Time: Our Constitutional Revolution *was published by Vintage last week.*



Ulster of the Balkans

British troops have been sent on a mission impossible in Bosnia

Simon Jenkins

The road to hell is paved with *good intentions. If you go via* Bosnia the intentions are gold-plated. You can preen in Washington, lunch in London, dine in Sarajevo and appear on television everywhere. You may wrench your arm patting yourself on the back, but the road keeps rolling on. Only soldiers and taxpayers get to *hell.*

This week marks the anniversary of the breaking of the first deadline for the withdrawal of foreign troops from Bosnia, in December 1996. The Government is soon expected to announce the breaking of the second, which expires in June next year. This is anticipated in a report from the *House of Commons Select committee* on Defence. It says the troops should stay there for ever, or words to that effect. Britain now has 5,300 soldiers in the Balkans, half as many as in Ulster, costing taxpayers £243 million a year. When Douglas Hurd sent the first 1,000 in 1992, he promised that their mission was limited to escorting *humanitarian* convoys. A year later the number was 2,500. Since then the expedition has experienced the usual "mission creep".

Bosnia is becoming Britain's second Northern Ireland. In Ulster, military intervention in support of the civil power was to be strictly temporary. That was a quarter *century ago. Soldiers, or at least their* masters, proved to be poor political scientists. The idea of withdrawal soon became unthinkable. Believing themselves the only bulwark against a bloodbath, British politicians developed a mindset in which everlasting direct rule was the only option.

A similar "Jupiter complex" has *arisen with the end of the Cold War.* Across the globe, national self-determination is a defunct concept. Only democracies are entitled to that privilege and then only if they choose the right leaders, which the Serbs have persistently declined to do. A trusty Western soldier is all that stands between the world's feuding plebs and Armageddon. The imperial fallacy never dies. It is merely transformed into a vague moral imperative parading in a blue beret or an aid agency Jeep.

Two conclusions emerge from the defence committee report. The first is that the so-called Stabilisation Force (Sfor) of 36,000 foreign personnel in Bosnia has become an entrenched colonial power. All civic discipline relies on its presence. It has charged itself with policing, public administration and even media censorship. Last autumn Sfor seized a television station to insist on "fair" reporting of United Nations activity, in reality to *back one side in the Bosnian Serb* elections.

Bosnia has become the world capital of interventionism. Pundits can identify an alphabet soup of ICRC, IDC, IFOR, IPTF, MAC, OHR, OSCE, PIC, Sfor and UNHCR. These custodians of the world's collective conscience offer *security without responsibility to* Serbs, Croat, Muslim and "Bosnian" alike, to war criminals, mafias, black marketeers, fanatics and decent citizens. They offer huge inflows of foreign exchange. Like all policing armies *they are popular* — for a time. The Catholics cheered the British troops into Londonderry in 1969, before the bullets and bombs began to fly.

The second conclusion is that, as result of this dependancy, withdraw*al can never be contemplated. Presi*dent Clinton promised that he would "have our boys home by Christmas 1996". Congress was outraged when he next said they would stay another 18 months, until June 1998. Now Washington is realising that deadline will not be kept. Britain will have to tag along behind. The select commit*tee has proposed that, rather than set* a short deadline (and tell another whopper), the Government should suggest three years. By then everyone may have forgotten deadlines and our boys can do good work for ever.

Forty-one British servicemen have died in Bosnia so far, 14 of them killed in action. They have been shot at, humiliated, taken hostage and left impotent before the taunts of those they were sent to help. Britain produces soldiers well-trained in the delicate art of limited war. They are much prized as moral mercenaries, by Americans wanting to launder their electioneering adventures and by the United Nations wanting to get off a peacekeeping hook.

Yet any soldier must have an achievable objective. British troops in Bosnia had two remits. The first was to police the ceasefire along the borders where the parties collapsed in 1995. The second was to re-establish civil, political and economic *life in the new Bosnian statelets,* sufficient to avoid further conflict when the troops withdrew 12 months later. The first objective was relatively easy, since all sides had fought to a standstill. The second was impossible. It was a politician's supremacist fantasy, an act of folly in the tradition of Khartoum, the Dardanelles and *Vietnam. The Foreign Office and the* American State Department seemed to think "restoring political life" was like restoring bridges and sewers.

Worse, the first objective vitiated the second. By relieving the Bosni*ans of any* obligation to police the ceasefire and cement it with compromise, a foreign presence merely secured a stalemate. Local leadership came to depend on the presence of foreign troops, not on popular con*sent. Such artificial politics cannot* mature or put down roots. Fanatics remain at a premium and moderates at a discount. Thirty years in Northern Ireland teaches us that. Nato is Karadzic's best prop, as British direct rule has been the IRA's recruiting sergeant.

The select committee bemoans the *absence of progress with political* stabilisation and worries that civil war may resume. It implies that this is despite Nato's efforts, regarding it as axiomatic that 36,000 foreign troops can have only a benign impact on local politics. The committee nowhere examines other recent interventions, such as Beirut and Somalia, where Western troops led to mayhem, and peace was not established until well after they had left. It worries that the conflict may just be on ice, that the date when Nato "can confidently leave Bosnia to run its own affairs will be indefinitely deferred". Yet the logic of this worry nowhere penetrates the committee's brain.

I believe that British soldiers should not be sent abroad without a clear military objective and a statement of interest. Despite much hifalutin jargon about "regional security", *troops went into Bosnia to* protect aid convoys. That was a charitable interest but not a national security one. Whether these convoys saved more lives than they cost (by falling into the wrong hands) is moot. What is incontrovertible is that American pressure sucked these troops into precisely the morass they *were pledged to avoid. If the select* committee has its way, they will be there for ever. These troops are not under United Nations command but under Nato, an alliance whose obscurity of purpose is now complete.

The British force has no exit strategy. The Americans are adept at cutting and running from escapades *that have exhausted their publicity* value. They scuttled from Somalia and have recently scuttled from Haiti. This part of the Balkans is set to remain a Nato protectorate until the Americans tire of it. British troops tend to return home only after a resounding victory (the Falklands) or when conditions on the ground have become *untenable, as in the retreat* from Empire. In Bosnia there is no victory. We must await untenability.

British people have shown their generosity towards suffering in former Yugoslavia. That generosity is expressed through aid, private charity *and the (grudging) acceptance of* refugees. That is a normal humanitarian response. It is quite different from the Government professing a national interest in the internal affairs of another state. British security is not at risk in Bosnia, nor is that of the Nato alliance. Other people's wars are not make-work *schemes for diplomats and soldiers.* There was no requirement to "nationalise" public horror at events in former Yugoslavia, least of all the fact that President Clinton had an election on his hands. British troops are not meant to fight American elections.

Tony Blair and Robin Cook must soon announce Britain's commitment *to Sfor beyond next June. They will* take the view that withdrawing from Bosnia would cost more politically in the short term than staying might cost financially. So they will waffle about the nobility of world peacekeeping. They will promise more support for our boys overseas. They will pledge just a few more months, or years, or even decades. The old British Empire was acquired in a fit of absent-mindedness. So, apparently, will be the new one.

Alan Coren

■ And upon this charge card cry: 'For Ffion, William, and a cruet set!'

Today's is no ordinary column. Today's is special. What makes it special is *that it is not a column at all.* It is a Readers' Offer. Indeed, it is so special that I am prepared to describe it as a Special Readers' Offer — in both senses, because *it is so doubly special that only* special readers will wish to take advantage of it.

It is not, that is to say, for those unspecial readers who ask to be offered nothing more than the rose-girt cottage of their dreams, or the periglobal cruise of a lifetime, or a year's free root-canal work; *it is for those* very special readers whose innermost yearnings strive beyond the mere material gee-gaws of this world. What I am offering this happy breed is the unique chance to become an imperishable part of our nation's history. Possibly, given a smidgeon of luck in the shape of a fair electoral breeze, our planet's.

You may, from that last proviso, have now twigged that what makes the chance unique is the blissy fact that, this coming Friday, William Hague is uniquely marrying Ffion Jenkins. The radiant young couple will splice, they will honeymoon, and, after all that excitement, they will hie them home to put their four little feet up in *delightful domestic premises* piled floor to ceiling with all those wedding gifts which, once they have put their four little feet down again, they will begin eagerly unwrapping to cries of the happiness which, I am sure, each and every one of us sincerely prays will follow them *all the days of their life* — very probably (and this above all is to be borne in mind, even by those whose sincere prayers may be somewhat alloyed by the thought) into Downing Street, because, as you know, there has never yet been a leader of the Conservative Party who *did not succeed to the* premiership.

Now, here is the Special Readers' Offer: would you like to be a part of all that, and thus of whatever history has in store? If so, this is what you must do: you must ring The Wedding Shop in Fulham Road, SW3. Someone at *the other end will, when* pressed, confirm that that is indeed where William and Ffion have got a little list. I know this, because I have myself just phoned, and I thus also know that there are plenty of affordable goodies left on that list, and that all you need do to *remove them from it and into* the premises and lives of the future Hagues is give The Wedding Shop your credit card number.

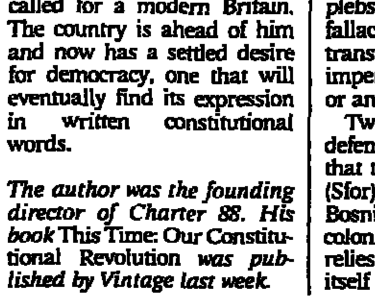
Think about it. For £126.50, you could send them a Royal Copenhagen vase; for £180 you could send them eight champagne *flutes, for £200* an *Irish* linen tablecloth, and for £259 a silver salver; but if any of these is, you feel, too high a price to shell out on a niche in Britain's glorious story, a tenner will buy you, and them, a very acceptable egg-cup.

And *remember, where his*tory's caprices are concerned you never know your luck: while the odds might seem to favour the champagne flutes — Prime Minister Hague offers a gargle to Charles III after one of their weekly moots, the King murmurs these are jolly nice glasses, the PM replies yes, we got them from Mrs Edna Wainwright of Beccles, the entire exchange subsequently appearing verbatim in the PM's *memoirs* — or the tablecloth, deployed, perhaps, to mollify President Adams at a lunch to discuss Sinn Fein's claim to the Falklands, there is nothing to say that a humble egg-cup hurled at, for example, Michael Howard during an acrimonious working breakfast, might not precipitate the demise of Toryism in what could very well come to be known as The Eggcup Landslide, and earn its lucky donor an *entire footnote,* even perhaps a full-colour mugshot, in *The Oxford History of the 21st Century.*

Be honest, has there ever been an offer more special than this? You do not have to snip anything out, you do not have to fill anything in, you do not have to collect anything up, you do not even have to complete a sentence which begins "I should like my name to be remembered until the last syllable of recorded time because . . .": all you have to do is dial and speak. But be quick about it: remember, there are only two more shopping days left until history.

Maggie Moo

BARONESS THATCHER v Alf Garnett. The former PM had a scorching encounter on Monday night with Warren Mitchell, who played the Cockney with bracing right-wing opinions in the television programme *Till Death Us Do Part.* Over Krug and shepherd's pie at the Christmas party of Lord Archer of Weston-super-Mare, Mitchell adopted his best Alf Garnett accent: "You women should be at home making the sandwiches," he told an astonished Lady T. "It's men who should be taking care of the politics. Women are only good for late-night sittings, when they can at least provide cocoa and blankets." A crowd gathered round, including the Archbishop of Canterbury, Peter Lilley, the American Ambassador (bemused) and the jovial Alan Duncan, who had effected the introduction.



Double act: Mitchell, Thatcher

To their relief, the baroness reacted with equanimity. "What about Florence Nightingale and Queen Victoria?" she asked. Quickly, the two struck up a rapport. "She suggested that we partner up and do a double act," says Mitchell. "We could go around the charity do's, with me telling her where a woman's place is. It would be better than *Morecambe and Wise.*"

● *ROAST strip sirloin beef, braised lettuce and bonemarrow were the substance of yesterday's menu in the Strangers' Dining Room at the Commons. Guests were told by the waiters that they could have everything on the menu except the bonemarrow. "It's off. For good."*

Small portions

SEIZED by seasonal spirit, John Major took his private office to Shepherd's, the Westminster joint co-owned by Michael Caine, for Christmas lunch. Last year No 10 was filled with the former PM's coterie for Christmas drinks. In these more humble times, a table for seven sufficed for John, Norma and his loyal retainers. Fearlessly the gathering ordered several plates of beef rib before the ban on such off-the-bone products. "Delicious," agreed the guests, prompting a familiar voice to quip: "From now on, beef will be like this Government — spineless." So delighted was Major with this convivial occasion he commented: "We ought to do this more often."

Party clash

LAST night's battle of the parties tested many a Tory loyalty. Ken Clarke, always a convivial figure, enjoyed the toasts of friends "paying tribute to his career" — those friends, that is, who resisted the temptations of Baroness Thatcher's bash at Chesham Place.

Thatcher's plan to "have over all her old chums", as she puts it, in turn clashed with another of Jeffrey Archer's jolly festive celebrations. "This tests the market value of the hosts," says one in-demand partygoer. "From what I can gather, people are buying shares in Ar*cher and selling in Thatcher, while* Clarke still remains very competitively priced."

● *WHILE the rest of his party sniff around new Labour, Lembit Opik, MP, Liberal Democrat, has been ingratiating himself with the Tories. "I invited William Hague to come and speak at my next constituency meeting," he says. "I like him and I think he'd go down well in Montgomeryshire." The invitation was declined. "He just laughed."*

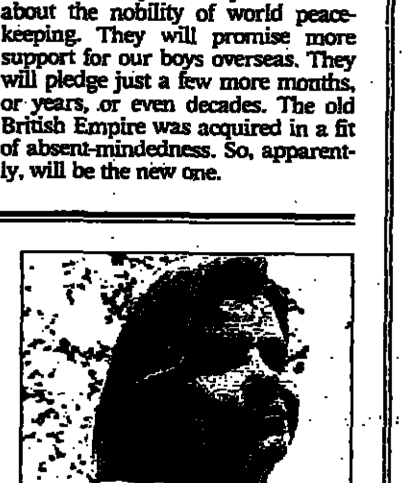
SOUTH WEST TRAINS ANNOUNCEMENT
WE APOLOGISE FOR THE DELAY IN STRIKES — STOPPAGES WILL BEGIN AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.
BALLOT ERROR HALTS STRIKE
Geoff Thompson

No way back

RESURRECTION on the set of 007 *can be but a dim hope for the ageing* lothario, Sean Connery: he is too expensive. "There was talk of him playing Bond's father, or coming back as a villain," says the 007 producer, Michael Wilson, "but we couldn't afford him."

Scott's missed

POOR daddy. Victoria Scott, who almost sunk her father, Sir Nick Scott, has resigned from the group that gave her a *platform* — just when she could have attacked Labour. Victoria has spent the past six years working for Radar, a disability group, but has now left to work with Unicef. Victoria gained attention in 1994 by calling for her father — then a Social Security Minister — to resign after he blocked a disabled rights Bill. But she will not now be around just when the Government could be planning to attack disability benefits. "Victoria was a great campaigner," says a fellow traveller. I am sure we'll see her again.



Off the Radar: Victoria

● *CHRISTMAS shopping is hampering efficiency of the Home Office folk. Two of them were dispatched to the House of Lords yesterday with briefing notes on the Crime and Disorder Bill for their minister. They stopped to buy some chocolate mints at the House of Commons shop. Problem. They left their briefing notes behind in the shop.*

JASPER GERARD

هكذا من الأكل

هكذا من الأصل

A REASONABLE BID

Sotheby's imperfect inquiry has still yielded worthwhile results

A reputation for plain-dealing may take generations to acquire and can be lost with a single act. The exposure of an attempt by Roeland Kollewijn, a Sotheby's Old Masters expert, to arrange the illegal export of a painting by the Northern Italian artist Giussepe Nogari to London blighted the name of one of the world's leading auction houses. Mr Kollewijn's act, exposed by the painstaking detective work of the journalist Peter Watson and reported in *The Times*, damaged the reputation of Sotheby's.

At the time, Diana Brooks, the company's chief executive, claimed that the revelations were an "opportunity to demonstrate just how important our integrity is". The steps that Sotheby's has since taken to investigate past behaviour have not been as open as they might have been. But the resolution of future good conduct which Ms Brooks makes in our pages today should go a long way to satisfy critics. Permanent satisfaction will come only from permanently improved, and visibly improved, procedures.

The executive responsible for Mr Koellwijn, George Bailey, responded to the original allegations with bluster. But Sotheby's directors appear quickly to have recognised the need to overhaul their reputation by conducting their own inquiry into their method of operations. Dealing in antiquities acquired in contravention of the laws of their country of origin lent urgency to the process of reform. Sotheby's proclaimed yesterday that earlier this year, it "began to articulate a policy that it will not sell any property which, while legally imported, has clearly been exported in violation of local law".

It would have been better if, having been stung into action by press exposure, Sotheby's had taken the best press advice and held a wholly independent inquiry. We argued that the "most rigorous and wide-ranging investigation of company malpractice" required "independent investigators". The appointment of a wholly detached and widely respected outsider, from the judiciary or academia, would have more clearly signalled a determination to scour every corner of the stables heedless of any consequence other than the re-establishment of a reputation for the highest standards.

Instead, Sotheby's established a review committee, independent in name but not in every particular, chaired by one of its own non-executive directors. Although much of the investigative work was carried out by two specially engaged law firms, the arm's length of the inquiry from the board was not as long as would have been ideal.

The fate of Mr Kollewijn is still unresolved, pending Scotland Yard's response to a dossier from the Italian police. It remains to be seen if this dossier contains evidence of other illegal acts. Of 8,000 other transactions investigated, irregularities were detected in about 20. Sotheby's argues that the interests of those who took part in these transactions in good faith preclude further disclosure. Sceptics will probably have to concentrate now on how Sotheby's planned new mechanisms work in practice.

While the process may not have been perfect, aspects of the outcome are encouraging. A pledge not to sell any work which may have been exported contrary to the laws of its country of origin, even if it can be sold legally in the US, should go some way to limit the reprehensible pillaging of sites of historic interest in less-developed nations. The establishment of an improved education programme for staff and the creation of a new compliance officer with a roving watchdog brief should encourage adherence to the highest standards. Taken together, these steps should help to restore Sotheby's reputation and could, with profit, establish a new benchmark for best practice among auction houses. The benefit to all London's auction houses of cleaning their business is clearer now than it has ever been.

TORIES FOR DEMOCRACY

The radical option is the best Conservative choice

The 1922 Committee has been in deep deliberation on an issue that is central to the Conservative Party's fortunes, internal reform and the future election of the leader. When these discussions started it appeared that the range of options under active consideration was disappointingly narrow. Sir Archibald Hamilton, on behalf of parliamentarians, had robustly insisted that MPs retain a controlling interest. It seemed that ordinary members would receive, at most, a share of between 25 per cent and 35 per cent in an electoral college.

There is now evidence of an emerging enthusiasm for democracy. A large number of MPs, including many first elected in May, have determined that a mass party will not be built on modest outreach. They have rallied behind a proposal, first set out in *The Times*, that would allow MPs to narrow the field to a shortlist of two or three figures but offer the final choice to the entire membership. The 1922 Committee will come to a conclusion shortly after Christmas. It even appears possible that, for the first time in its history, the parliamentary party might make that decision through a ballot rather than mysterious "consultations". This would be a precedent for enhanced participation.

Under the rules as they stand, Conservative MPs have absolute control over the structure of leadership selection. Any initiative that is adopted in Westminster will be placed automatically in the overall package that will be presented to the party. No alteration or amendment is permitted. The Tories in the country will be offered change on a take-it-or-take-it basis. The whole reform agenda — including many items that should command widespread support — would need to be thrown out in order to reopen the leadership question. That rejection would hardly reflect well on, or be welcomed by, William Hague. The case against an electoral college is powerful. It contains the inherent risk that a leader would fail to obtain a majority among either MPs or the members. The Labour Party has been fortunate to have averted this disaster. In 1981, its machinery came within a millimetre of making Tony Benn the Deputy Leader despite the fact that two-thirds of MPs had preferred Denis Healey. Labour has found that this model does not end argument over leadership selection. The proportions awarded are inevitably arbitrary and therefore open to continuous challenge. The same would be true for the Tories.

The *Times* alternative would avoid these difficulties. Only those contenders — three at most — who had secured at least 25 per cent support from their colleagues would enter the decisive ballot. If Labour had used this system 16 years ago Mr Benn would not have qualified for the final contest. A full-scale campaign among ordinary members would follow. The victorious candidate could demonstrate support in the House of Commons and Conservatives in the country. This would be a combination unmatched among the other parties.

The radical option would be also be the safest choice for Conservatives. The incremental approach supported by the old stalwarts would simply store up trouble for the future. The new formula would also secure stronger support for the rest of the reform project. It would symbolise the Tory transition from narrow elite to national electorate. Mr Hague's stated aim of a million members for the millennium would acquire additional credibility. The 1922 Committee should concentrate on 2002 and what it can do to advance the party's prospects. That requires a 100 per cent — not 35 per cent — commitment to democracy.

CRY WOLF IN EARNEST

This is the next large mammal due to vanish from the Earth

The Ethiopian wolf is not usually allotted a role in the Christmas story, not even by the fables and iconography of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church. But this Christmas readers of *The Times* are being given a chance to rescue it from extinction.

For the second of our Christmas appeals for charity we have chosen the most endangered canid left in the world. Not more than 400 adults of the species survive high in a few mountain ranges: the Ethiopian wolf is on track to become the next large mammal to vanish from the world. Since 1991 a rabies epidemic and canine distemper have been spread to the wolves by the wild dogs used by the Oromo tribe for herding their cattle. Thousands have been wiped out. Hybridisation and other diseases of domestic dogs have taken their toll. The wolf's Afroalpine habitat is threatened by the encroachment of high altitude subsistence agriculture and overgrazing. And the steady advance of man has introduced new forms of death by traffic accidents and shooting.

The Ethiopian wolf, a genuine small wolf rather than a large jackal, is the closest living relation to the wolves of Arabia and Africa. It is a scavenger and a nuisance to farmers rather than a threat to man. And its survival is possible, if action is taken now.

As we report today, the Born Free Foundation is introducing a three-year programme to save the Ethiopian wolf. This includes vaccination of domestic dogs against rabies and distemper, education of the mountain tribesmen in responsible dog ownership, and captive breeding of the wolves in their natural habitat. There the species may breed to survive in its social grouping of a wide-ranging pack animal, protected from the pressure of human beings.

A wolf is an unusual beneficiary of a Christmas appeal, because of its black reputation in fables, fiction and parables. It is not as cuddly to the imagination as an otter nor as wonderful as the elephant. But wolf's threat to man was always grossly exaggerated. And the survival of the Ethiopian species on the planet is now on the line. The money needed for Born Free's programme to save the Ethiopian wolf is only £200,000.

Giving to a huge charity can seem like trying to dose the beneficiary with eye-drops from a tenth-storey window. From such a height the prognosis and results of the medication are difficult to assess. This charity is small enough for its projects to be specific and their effects to be evident. It is large enough to make the difference between survival and extinction. Beside the ox, the ass and the sheep around the Christmas manger, the wolf is an unusual candidate for Christmas benevolence. But this is the last chance for the Ethiopian wolf.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

Risks and realism in beef warnings

From Mr Malcolm Oliver

Sir, The Department of Health, presumably acting on the advice of its medical advisers, believes that the *risk of transmission of CJD from* potentially infected blood products is so slight that it is merely *advising* hospitals not to use the supplies in question, and has decided not to contact the patients involved because of "the enormous burden" that would result from telling them that they have a remote risk of contracting the *disease* (report, December 16).

The Ministry of Agriculture, however, also acting on the advice of its medical advisers, believes that the similarly slight risk of contracting CJD from beef bones is sufficient to require the withdrawal of the product, and also to impose "an enormous burden" on beef-on-the-bone eaters by telling them of their remote risk of catching the disease.

Surely they cannot both be right?

Yours sincerely,
MALCOLM OLIVER,
26 Green Lane, Purley CR8 3PG.
December 16.

From Sir Julian Rose

Sir, Professor Colin Blakemore's assertion (report, December 12) that young children should shun beef and *lamb in favour of chicken seems* finally to rule out any flicker of hope that "science" might be acting in the public interest as regards food safety.

Chicken has been responsible for the highest number of poisoning incidents of any meat in the UK food chain for the past decade. Not surprising when, in stark contrast to beef and lamb, over 90 per cent of all poultry meat is raised and slaughtered under highly intensive and inhumane factory-farming conditions that result *in half of all birds being contaminated* with salmonella.

A by now thoroughly confused public has a right to know — particularly since government hides the information — that farming systems do exist that never feed beef or lamb or even chickens on the rendered remains of their own kind.

Professor Blakemore's contribution adds to the epidemic of tunnel vision that has overtaken so many scientists of late.

Yours sincerely,
JULIAN ROSE,
Hardwick Estate Office,
Whitchurch, Reading RG8 7RB.
December 13.

From Mr Neil Datson

Sir, The death of Mrs Angela Neath's brother (letter, December 13) was a tragedy and, if preventable, a scandal, but it must not be used to stifle reasoned debate about the beef-on-the-bone ban, any more than the victims of speeding motorists should be allowed to dictate speed limits.

If we accept the supposition that *new variant CJD is linked to BSE* we must further accept that the link is with cheap manufactured products in the 1980s and early 1990s. These were made from the less salubrious parts of (occasionally infected) old dairy cows — "beef" only in the technical sense of being derived from bovines, and as like to today's prime meat from healthy young beef cattle as a milk float is to a limousine.

Furthermore, the victims of new variant CJD were not forewarned. Nobody has any excuse now not to know that a committee of scientists postulate that they are running a 1 in 1.1 billion chance of premature death by drinking a bowl of oxtail soup, or eating a T-bone steak. Curtailing freedom on such odds is an abuse of power.

Yours faithfully,
NEIL DATSON,
Glebe Farm,
Spelsbury, Oxford OX7 3JR.
December 13.

From Mr Paul Perrin

Sir, I was very surprised to read that No 10 would be throwing away the 15lb rib joint that was presented to Mr Blair by the British National Cattle Association (report and photograph, December 16). As the joint was uncooked, what was to prevent the meat being removed from the bone and cooked separately?

Yours,
P. PERRIN,
95 Trevelyan Road,
Tooting, SW17 9LR.
December 16.

Children last?

From Professor Ronald Davie

Sir, On Friday, December 5, I attended a debate in the House of Commons on children with special educational needs. The particular focus was a recent government Green Paper on this topic, which by common accord was the most important review in this area for the past 20 years. From my position in the Strangers' Gallery, the number of Members I counted in the Chamber throughout the debate ranged from seven to 15.

I was struck by the contrast between the attendance for this topic and that for foxhunting, the week before. Does this indicate MPs' scale of priorities?

Yours truly,
RONALD DAVIE
(Educational and child psychologist),
Bridge House, Upton,
Caldbeck, Cumbria CA7 8EU.
December 7.

Problems in store from benefit cuts

From Councillor Shirley Virando

Sir, I am grateful to the "rebels" (they are better called men and women of principle) for voting against the Government's reduction of support for *lone parents (letters, December 9 and* 13).

Until recently I was a lone parent, and had been for many years. I am also a Labour councillor and, as my main reason for standing was the previous Government's constant attacks on single parents, I find it particularly difficult to understand why this Government is continuing in similar vein.

If lone parents, the disabled and others who are victims of discrimination and in poverty, cannot look to the Labour Party for support, and get it, who can they turn to? I hope the Government will learn a lesson from this vote, and consider carefully what they do on the issue of disability benefits.

I would also suggest that all Labour MPs who voted with the Government should reflect on why they joined the party and examine their consciences.

Yours faithfully,
SHIRLEY VIRANDO
(Chair of Hillingdon
Equal Opportunities Forum),
Members Room,
Labour Group, Phase II,
Civic Centre, Uxbridge UB8 1UW.
December 12.

From Mrs Elizabeth Ray

Sir, The term "single mother" is misleading, as it brackets the feckless and *irresponsible mothers — of whom* there are some — with those who are single not from choice but circumstances.

Many such produced their children when they were in a happy marriage or steady relationship, but now find themselves alone through divorce, desertion or death. Their children have already suffered the loss of a father, and to put them into the care of someone, however kind and efficient, who is not their mother, or make them into latch-key kids, cannot make their lives more settled or secure.

If mothers have to go out to work they will need full-time employment *to make it financially worthwhile*. Unless they have particular skills or qualifications, which many do not, employers will be reluctant to give them good posts when they might have to take time off to fulfil *family* obligations.

As a retired social worker, I know only too well the long-term social problems that an insecure childhood can cause. Many single mothers might like to return to work but feel their first responsibility is to care for their children and give them the security they need, and they should be helped in this rather than penalised.

Yours faithfully,
ELIZABETH RAY,
Flat 2, 66 Regency Square,
Brighton BN1 2FF.

From Mr Peter Turner

Sir, Mrs Verney Sergeant (letter, December 13) champions wartime lone mothers, who would just "get on with it" and not "whinge" like their counterparts today, but *there is a fundamental* difference in the two conditions. Wartime mothers were likely to be surrounded by their families, living, if not in the same house, then in the immediate neighbourhood, and would have received the traditional support that families used to provide in so many different ways.

In comparison, we now lead nomadic and lonely lives. Our families are spread far and wide, too remote and preoccupied with their own worries to be able to provide any effective help and support.

The loss of our social and family fabric is a major contributor to today's welfare problems.

Yours faithfully,
PETER TURNER,
Huntingtons,
Theydon Road, Epping CM16 4EF.
cm164ef@aol.com
December 13.

From Mr J. R. Sharp

Sir, The point is not whether those in receipt of child benefit, pensions, etc, are free to refuse them (letter, December 15), but whether the less altruistic who do not need them should be free to accept them.

Yours faithfully,
JOHN R. SHARP,
55 Twining Brook Road,
Cheadle Hulme, Cheadle SK8 5RJ.
December 16.

Renewable energy

From Dr Gabriel Alexander Khoury

Sir, I am a founding member of the UK Solar Energy Society, set up by Dr Mary Archer in 1973. In 1978 I demonstrated, in a paper in *New Scientist*, that it is possible to achieve a 100kph flight speed in an airship powered by solar cells without any on-board fuel. It is also possible to supply Europe's entire energy needs from solar cells covering a relatively small proportion of the North African desert — politics and security issues apart.

Environmentally aware *scientists* and engineers have long known that long-term sustainable energy policy cannot be based on a limited and polluting fossil-fuel resource (letters, December 1, 4, 10, 15). Yet, sadly, in the early 1980s the US reduced its renewable energy R&D budget nearly tenfold, to less than $100 million per annum, because of the drop in crude oil prices, thus demonstrating that its previous interest was a kneejerk reaction to the energy crises of the 1970s.

The current problems of air pollution and global warming are obvious consequences of this lack of long-term vision. Governments of industrialised nations should develop policies to encourage — albeit nearly 30 years late — the gradual introduction of renewable and clean sources of energy.

Yours faithfully,
G. A. KHOURY,
Imperial College of Science,
Technology and Medicine,
Department of Civil Engineering,
Imperial College Road, SW7 2BU.
December 16.

From Mr John H. Park

Sir, Our ancestors abandoned traditional timber construction for housing with the advent of the Industrial Revolution (report and leading article, December 11). That revolution provided cheap energy to use with our natural clay resource for brick manufacture: most of our hardwood forests had previously been lost to shipbuilding.

As a result, UK housing stock is somewhat at odds with concerns over carbon-dioxide emissions, accounting for some one third of our annual energy bill and indirectly responsible for *the release of an estimated 80 million* tons of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere. To build in the necessary energy efficiency for the future a return to a timber structure for domestic house construction, used for 90 per cent of low-rise housing in most developed countries, could reduce significantly our energy demands for domestic heating.

If British houses were insulated to Swedish standards, heating bills could be cut by up to 90 per cent. A four-bedroom house with a structural timber framework, constructed in the UK in 1990 for an energy efficiency exhibition, cost £55 a year to heat in its first two years.

Developers' energies should now be directed toward those unseen elements that can add real value to a house.

Yours faithfully,
J. H. PARK
(Proprietor, The Wood Consultancy),
Suite 8, St Albans House,
40 Lynchford Road,
Farnborough GU14 6EF.
December 16.

Bowled out

From Mr Mike Foley

Sir, I was fascinated to read of the latest demonstration of male chauvinism in sport by the English Indoor Bowling Association when they declined to fulfil a fixture against the English Bowls Players' Association because the EBPA team included two women bowlers (report, December 9).

Bowls must be one of the few sports *where men and women can compete* against each other on an equal footing — perhaps this is what frightens Mr Bill Fowler, President of the EIBA.

It would be interesting to reflect upon how much his attitude and that of his colleagues towards the women may change should the EIBA ever wish to dip into the funds of the National Lottery — only available if men and women are treated equally.

Yours faithfully,
MIKE FOLEY,
13 Pollards Close, Goffs Oak,
Hertfordshire EN7 5JP.
December 10.

Woodrow Wyatt

From Dr Julian Lewis,
MP for New Forest East
(Conservative)

Sir, May I add a postscript to your comprehensive obituary of Woodrow Wyatt (December 9), which rightly *noted his role "close to the heart of the* revolution which took place in British politics during the 1980s".

It was he who in 1984 identified the weakness *in the Trade Union Act* of that year, which failed to make postal ballots mandatory for key union elections. This was the start of a four-year campaign, *in conjunction with* Aims of Industry, the Freedom Association and Policy Research Associates, which ended in success in the 1988 Employment Act. Far-left ballot-rigging was struck a mortal blow.

Equally, Woodrow's joint campaign with Lord Orr-Ewing led to stricter *provisions for political impartiality* being written into the 1990 Broadcasting Act. These formed the basis for judging complaints about bias in political programmes.

I shall never forget the excitement of working with this dedicated and courageous man, whose achievements in *undermining the anti-democratic left* were second to none.

Yours faithfully,
JULIAN LEWIS,
House of Commons.
December 9.

Business letters, page 27

Letters that are intended for publication should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be sent to a fax number — 0171-782 5046.
e-mail to: *letters@the-times.co.uk*

Rural deprivation without use of cars

From the Bishop of Dorchester
and the Director of the Oxfordshire
Rural Community Council

Sir, Mr Martin Pawley wrote from Oxfordshire (letter, December 8) to say that "only a tiny percentage of rural households are without the use of a car". This must be challenged.

With the decline in public transport, a car has ceased to be a luxury and become a necessity in rural areas. But the fact that the vast majority of rural households own a car (many more than one) should not obscure the fact that a significant proportion of those who live in the countryside have only very restricted or indeed no access, *mainly because another member of* the household takes the car to work.

The last census (1991) indicated that 22 per cent of households in Oxfordshire had no car and 1995 research in the rural north of the county revealed 13.2 per cent of households without a car. A recent study of deprivation in the county *(The Other Oxfordshire*, *Margaret Moodie, 1997) confirms* what the Reverend Nick Read pointed out (letter, December 13), that frequently it is the disabled, the elderly, young mothers and low-income families who suffer from what planners call "locational disadvantage" or "spatial deprivation", but which means they do not have access to a car.

It is ironic that the experience of many rural organisations indicates that deprivation can be at its harshest in the more affluent villages. Organisations such as the Rural Housing Trust indicate that the need for social housing is greatest in these areas.

At a time when the countryside is under threat from many quarters and when the future of rural organisations such as the Rural Development Commission are under threat, it is important to recognise that not all rural *dwellers are affluent*.

Yours faithfully,
†ANTHONY DORCHESTER,
JOHN HARDWICKE
(Director, Oxfordshire Rural
Community Council),
Holmby House,
Sibford Ferris, Banbury OX15 5RG.
December 13.

Garden dumped

From Mr Philip Lowe

Sir, You report today that a retired couple who transformed a Notting*hamshire rubbish tip into a garden* without planning permission have been ordered to uproot their work.

Is this happening in the same country where it is proposed to build 2.2 million homes on farmland and in the green belt in the next 20 years (report, November 13; letters, November 21, 25, 28)?

Yours faithfully,
PHILIP LOWE,
7 Lillys Road,
Newport, Lincoln LN1 3DH.
December 12.

From Dr Ronald Smith

Sir, I have just read with near disbelief the bureaucratic decision of Rushcliffe Borough Council to destroy the result of eight years' work by Mr and Mrs Leadley.

Have these *jacks-in-office* no compassion — or even common sense?

Yours faithfully,
R. C. SMITH,
28 Thorney Green Road,
Stowupland, Suffolk IP14 4AB.

From Mr Robert Evans

Sir, The manner in which Martin and Pauline Leadley are being forced to plough up their garden proves the old adage: no good deed will go unpunished.

Yours faithfully,
ROBERT EVANS,
1304 Falcon Street,
Anaheim, CA 92804, USA.
b-evans@ix.netcom.com
December 12.

First things first

From Mr S. J. Henders

Sir, The churches' attempt to reclaim the millennium for Christianity (report, December 5) might be better aimed at the more immediate festival of Christmas.

Yours faithfully,
S. J. HENDERS,
52 Station Road,
Barton, Liverpool L39 7JN.
se@campus.bt.com

Reindeer recruit

From Mr A. H. Davis

Sir, I must correct the statement in your third editorial today. Santa's flying sleigh is not drawn by red-nosed reindeer.

Careful study of the words of the song *Rudolf, the Red-nosed Reindeer* will reveal that the said Rudolf was recruited for the duration of only one particular foggy Christmas Eve. Santa is stated to have asked Rudolf: "Won't you guide my sleigh tonight?"

There is no evidence that the employment became permanent, despite the fact that Rudolf was to "go down in his—tor—ee".

Yours faithfully,
A. H. DAVIS,
29 Cherry Lane, Hampton Magna,
Warwick CV35 8SL.
December 15.

COURT CIRCULAR

BUCKINGHAM PALACE
December 16: The Lady Elton has succeeded the Lady Susan Hussey as Lady in Waiting to The Queen.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE
December 16: The Duke of York, Colonel-in-Chief, The Royal Irish Regiment, this afternoon received the following officers:

Lieutenant Colonel Robert Kendell upon relinquishing his appointment as Commanding Officer, 4th/5th Battalion, The Royal Irish Rangers (Volunteers) and Lieutenant Colonel John Rollins upon assuming the appointment:

Lieutenant Colonel James Linford upon relinquishing his appointment as Chief of Staff, Regimental Headquarters, The Royal Irish Regiment, and Lieutenant Colonel James Jackson upon assuming the appointment; and

Lieutenant Colonel John Deverell upon relinquishing his appointment as Commanding Officer, 8th (County Armagh and County Tyrone) Battalion, The Royal Irish Regiment.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE
December 16: The Princess Royal, Patron, the Butler Trust, this morning visited Her Majesty's Prison Woodhill, Tattenhoe Street, Milton Keynes, and was received by Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Buckinghamshire (Sir Nigel Mobbs).

Her Royal Highness this afternoon opened Parmiter's School Sports Centre, High Elms Lane, Garston, near Watford, and was received by Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Hertfordshire (Mr Simon Bowes Lyon).

The Princess Royal, President, The Princess Royal Trust for Carers, later visited Hertfordshire Carers Centre, Sucklings Yard, Church Street, Ware, Hertfordshire, and Glaxo Wellcome, Park Road.

Her Royal Highness, President, Save the Children Fund, this evening attended the 1997 Festival of Trees Gala Dinner at the Natural History Museum, London SW7.

CLARENCE HOUSE
December 16: Dame Frances Campbell-Preston has succeeded the Hon Mrs Rhodes as Lady in Waiting to Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother.

ST JAMES'S PALACE
December 16: The Prince of Wales, President, Business in the Community, this morning held a report back seminar with business leaders who attended the autumn 1997 "Seeing is Believing" programme, which promotes business-driven community regeneration, at St James's Palace.

His Royal Highness, Patron, Help the Aged, this afternoon visited a day centre for older people at the Peel Centre, Percy Circus, London WC1.

KENSINGTON PALACE
December 16: The Princess Margaret, Countess of Snowdon, Colonel-in-Chief, The Light Dragoons, this afternoon received Lieutenant Colonel Timothy Checketts upon relinquishing his appointment as Commanding Officer and Lieutenant Colonel David Rutherford-Jones upon assuming the appointment.

KENSINGTON PALACE
December 16: Princess Alice, Duchess of Gloucester, Patron, British Limbless Ex-Servicemen's Association, this afternoon received Colonel Henry Hugh Smith (Chairman) and Lieutenant Colonel Ray Holland (General Secretary).

The Duke of Gloucester this evening attended a presentation of the "Story of Christmas" at St George's Church, Hanover Square, London W1, and afterwards attended a Reception at the Wallace Collection, Manchester Square.

The Duchess of Gloucester, Patron, Parkinson's Disease Society, this evening attended a Carol Concert at St Marylebone Church, London NW1.

THATCHED HOUSE LODGE
RICHMOND PARK
December 16: Princess Alexandra, Deputy Colonel-in-Chief of the Light Infantry, this afternoon received Lieutenant General J.F. Deverell (Colonel of the Regiment), Lieutenant Colonel A.M.W. Mortimer upon relinquishing command of the 5th Battalion and Lieutenant Colonel C.C.S. Booth upon assuming the command.

Her Royal Highenss, accompanied by the Rt Hon Sir Angus Ogilvy, this evening attended *Joy to the World*, a Christmas Celebration at the Royal Albert Hall, London SW7.

School news

Ardingly College

The new Headmaster of Ardingly College, is to be Mr John Franklin, Deputy Headmaster of St Peter's College, Adelaide. He will succeed Mr James Flecker, who retires in September 1998.

Mr Franklin, 44, was born and educated in Australia. He has taught English in a variety of schools including Toowoomba Grammar School and Sedbergh School. He also spent three years at Marlborough College where he taught English and was an Assistant Housemaster. Since 1993 he has been Deputy Head of St Peter's — one of Australia's oldest and most prestigious Anglican boys' schools. His wife, Kim, is Head of English at Pembroke School, a leading independent co-educational school in the city.

The Mount School York

Autumn Term at The Mount School York culminated in our annual Christmas Meeting held on Sunday, December 14. The School has enjoyed an eventful term with some fine achievements, notably our fencers representing Great Britain in Europe and the presentation of almost £3,000 to the British Polio Fellowship. The Spring Term commences on Tuesday, January 6, 1998.

Quainton Hall School, Harrow

The Governors of Quainton Hall School are pleased to announce the appointment of Mr Desmond Banister, BA, AKC, at present Senior Tutor at Royal Hospital School, Stourbridge, as Headmaster from September 1, 1998. He succeeds Mr Peter Milner who is retiring after 29 years service.

SIMON BURT

Paul Hoggard, a sand artist who spends his summers creating giant faces and figures on the beaches of west Cornwall, working on a figure from the Madonna and Child and the Three Kings that he is making from ten tons of sand. The sculpture, which should be finished tomorrow, will stand in an annex of Truro Cathedral for three weeks

Royal engagements

The Prince of Wales, Patron, Philharmonia Chorus, will attend a performance of Verdi's *Requiem* at the Festival Hall at 7.10 to mark the 40th anniversary of the chorus.

The Princess Royal, Patron, National Association of Victims Support Schemes, will attend a meeting of the advisory board, Church House, Westminster, at 10.30; as Patron, Sense - The National Deafblind and Rubella Association, will attend a Friends Luncheon, Rutland Trust, Rutland House, Rutland Gardens, SW7, at 12.30; and as President, Animal Health Trust, will attend the Christmas Celebration dinner, Banqueting House, Whitehall, at 6.30.

The Duchess of Gloucester will attend a Carols by Candlelight service at St Luke's, Sydney Street, SW3, at 6.20 in aid of the Honeypot Home Charity.

The Duchess of Kent will present the Children of Courage Awards, Westminster Abbey, at 10.55.

Birthdays today

Mr Peter Blackburn, chairman, Nestlé UK, 57; Dame Mary Cartwright, former Mistress, Girton College, Cambridge, 97; Professor Mark Casson, economist, 52; Mr Christopher Cazenove, actor, 52; Mr David Collett, chairman, National Centre for Volunteering, 63; Viscount Daventry, 76; Lord de Villiers, 86; Lord Glenamara, CH, 85; Mr Bernard Hill, actor, 53; Miss Gwendolen Kirby, former matron, Great Ormond Street Hospital for Children, 86; the Hon Dominic Lawson, Editor, *The Sunday Telegraph*, 42; Mr Tom Mayer, electronic engineer, 70; Mr Kerry Packer, chairman, Australian publishing and broadcasting companies, 61; Sir Leonard Peach, former chairman, Police Complaints Authority, 65; Mr Robert Robinson, broadcaster, 71; Mr D.A.G. Smith, former Headmaster, Bradford Grammar School, 63; Mr Tommy Steele, actor and singer, 62; Baroness Strange, 70.

University news

Cambridge

Emmanuel College

The following Scholarship elections have been made:

Bachelor Scholars

Thamer A Backhouse (Classics);
Eoin S Gillen (Music);
Katherine S Griffiths (Modern Languages);
Nathan MacDonald (Theology);
Daniel B Radov (Natural Sciences).

Senior Scholars

J H Tom Bentham (Engineering);
Nicholas G N Brown (Theology);
Matthew J Bullimore (Theology);
Neil M Douglas (Mathematics);
Emily A Dyson (Natural Sciences);
Peter J I Ellis (Medical Sciences);
Ramin Farzaneh-Far (Medical Sciences);
Claire H L Fowler (Veterinary Sciences);
Jason O J Freeman (Anglo-Saxon Norse and Celtic);
Jennifer S Gibb (Natural Sciences);
Colin A Green (Engineering);
Katherine A Halsey (English);
David R Hargreaves (Engineering);
Mohamed F Hassan (Mathematics);
Andrew E Holland (Natural Sciences);
Robert L Jack (Natural Sciences);
Hilary J E Jones (Veterinary Sciences);
T W Ada Ma (Medical Sciences);
Anna K R Malpas (Modern Languages);
Paul M McCourt (Engineering);
James W Murray (Natural Sciences);
Chetan Narshi (Medical Sciences);
John D Oates (English);
David J Parkin (Engineering);
Paul C Roberts (Engineering);
Hugh M Robinson (Mathematics);
Gideon S Sanitt (English);
Daniel J Shepherd (Mathematics);
Alana E A Tervo (Social and Political Sciences);
Jennie E Vollmer (Medical Sciences);
Michele S L Wong (Medical Sciences);
Elizabeth J Wynn (Natural Sciences).

Organ Scholar

Richard T Latham (Music).

Anniversaries

BIRTHS: Prince Rupert, Royalist commander in the civil war, Prague, 1619; Domenico Cimarosa, composer, Naples, 1749; Sir Humphry Davy, inventor of the miners' safety lamp, Penzance, 1778; John Greenleaf Whittier, poet, Haverhill, Massachusetts, 1807; Jules de Goncourt, diarist, Paris, 1830; Ford Madox Ford, novelist and critic, Merton, Surrey, 1873; W.L. Mackenzie King, Prime Minister of Canada 1921-26, 1926-30 and 1935-48, Berlin, Ontario, 1874.

DEATHS: Simon Bolivar, "Liberator" of South America, Santa Marta, Colombia, 1830; William Thomson, 1st Baron Kelvin, physicist, Largs, Strathclyde, 1907; Elizabeth Garrett Anderson, physician and advocate of women's rights to practise medicine, Aldeburgh, 1917; Sir Bernard Spilsbury, pathologist, London, 1947; Dorothy L. Sayers, detective novelist, essayist and translator, Witham, Essex, 1957; Harold Holt, Prime Minister of Australia 1966-67, drowned off Portsea, Victoria, 1967.

The first powered flight was achieved by the Wright brothers in the *Flyer I*, at Kill Devil Hill, North Carolina, 1903.

The Battle of the River Plate: the Graf Spee was scuttled off Montevideo, 1939.

The closure of the Suez Canal resulted in petrol rationing, 1956.

Memorial service

Professor K.W. Sykes

A service of thanksgiving for the life of Professor Keble Sykes, a former Vice-Principal of Queen Mary College, was held yesterday in the college chapel. The Rev David Peebles, chaplain, officiated.

Professor Graham Zellick, Principal, and Professor Ray Bonnett read the lessons. Professor Donald Bradley, FRS, and Professor Bernard Aylett gave addresses.

Dinners

Turners' Company

The Lord Mayor and the Sheriffs were the guests of honour at a dinner given by the Master and Wardens of the Turners' Company last night at Apothecaries' Hall. Mr Peter Francis Worlidge, Master, presided and presented the Lord Mayor with a burr elm turned bowl.

During the evening the Master presented the Turners' Shield to the Team Leader of 128 (Portsmouth) Reclamation Company REME (Volunteers), who had won the field competition earlier this year. The Director-General Equipment Support for the Army and Masters and Clerks of City Livery Companies were among the guests.

Royal Naval Engineers' Dining Club

Mr Alistair Cumming was the principal guest at the annual dinner of the Royal Naval Engineers' Dining Club held last night at the Naval Club, Mayfair. Rear-Admiral J.A. Trewby was in the chair.

Service luncheon

RAF Club

Air Vice-Marshal P.J. Goddard, Chairman of the RAF Club and Group Captain A.J.R. Banks, presided jointly at the annual Christmas luncheon held at the Club last night.

Forthcoming marriages

Mr A.E.D. Cameron and Miss L.E. Sutton-Scott-Tucker

The engagement is announced between Alistair, son of Mr and Mrs Ewen Cameron, of Harringworth, Northamptonshire, and Lucy, daughter of Mr and Mrs Michael Sutton-Scott-Tucker, of Riversbridge, Dartmouth, Devon.

Mr D.W.F. Coates and Señorita A. Ferrufino

The engagement is announced between David, elder son of Mr and Mrs Michael Coates, of Hammersmith, London, and Aminta, youngest daughter of Señor and Señora Ferrufino, of El Progreso, Honduras.

Mr R.M. Coates and Miss S.L. Bolton

The engagement is announced between Richard, younger son of Mr and Mrs Michael Coates, of Hammersmith, London, and Samantha, elder daughter of Mr and Mrs David Bolton, of Shoreham, Sussex.

Mr J.J. Cross and Miss E. Duralska

The engagement is announced between Jeremy, elder son of the Rev James and Mrs Cross, of Stretford, Manchester, and Ewa, only daughter of Mr and Mrs Wladyslaw Duralski, of Coventry, West Midlands.

Mr J.L. Eddis and Miss J.P. Kottler

The engagement is announced between Jonathan, eldest son of Mr and Mrs Richard Eddis, of Little Horkesley, Essex, and Polly, eldest daughter of Mr and Mrs John Kottler, of Little Comberton, Worcestershire.

Mr J.G.B. Portman and Miss S.J. Mordaunt

The engagement is announced between Jonathan, younger son of Mr Anthony Portman, of Upton, Andover, Hampshire, and Mrs Laurence McNaught, of Easton Royal, Pewsey, Wiltshire, and Sophie, younger daughter of Mr and Mrs Christopher Mordaunt, of Brawby, North Yorkshire.

Mr R.J.C. Heale and Miss M.G. Telenta

The engagement is announced between Roger, elder son of Mr and Mrs Toby Heale, of Goudhurst, Kent, and Hong Kong, and Gabriela, daughter of Señor and Señora Horacio Telenta, of Entre Rios, Argentina.

Mr C.A. Hamilton and Miss L.J. Brend

The engagement is announced between Colin, son of Mr and Mrs J.A. Hamilton, of Teddington, Middlesex, and Lesley, daughter of Mr and Mrs R.H.J. Brend, of Chudleigh, Devon.

The Hon S.R.E.C. James and Miss A.K. Gregory

The engagement is announced between Sebastian, son of Lord and Lady Northbourne, of Betteshanger, Kent, and Anna, daughter of Mr Anthony Gregory and Mrs Marie Gregory, both of Sheffield, Yorkshire.

Mr M.J. Siebert and Miss G.E. Ferguson

The engagement is announced between Matthew, elder son of Mr and Mrs John Siebert, of Lower Bourne, Farnham, Surrey, and Gillian, daughter of Mr and Mrs George Ferguson, of Fleet, Hampshire.

Mr I.A. Turner and Miss A.V. Revett

The engagement is announced between Ian, son of Mr Allan Turner and the late Mrs Jose Turner, of Walderslade, Kent, and Amanda, youngest daughter of Mr and Mrs Miles Revett, of Sevenoaks, Kent.

Marriage

Mr R.H.W. Galbraith and Mrs G.L.R. Gibson

The marriage took place on December 13, 1997, at the Orwell Church of Scotland, Milnathort, between Robert, only son of Mr and Mrs Hamish Galbraith, of Kinnettas, Strathpeffer, to Gillian, younger daughter of the late Captain John Edington and of Mrs Edington, of Gladsmuir, East Lothian.

Latest wills

Lionel Stuart George, company director, of Romiley, Stockport, Cheshire, left estate valued at £2,274,357 net.

Betty Highwood, of Blandford St Mary, Blandford Forum, Dorset, left estate valued at £2,718,556 net.
She left £10,000 to the PDSA and to the Margaret Green Foundation Trust and £5,000 to the Church at Blandford St Mary plus shares in her residuary estate to Cancer Research Campaign, British Heart Foundation, Friends of Blandford Hospital, Donkey Sanctuary, Cats Protection League, Cancer Relief Macmillan Fund, and Marie Curie Cancer Care.

Francis Edward John Bletchly, of Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire, left estate valued at £1,095,273 net.
He left £500 to Monks Risborough (St Dunstan's) PCC.

Fay Bell Colebrook, of Ascot, Berkshire, left estate valued at £1,345,190 net.
She left £2,000 to Toynbee Hall; £1,000 to the Distressed Gentlefolk's Aid Association.

Gillian Mary Cullimore, of Beaconsfield, Buckinghamshire, left estate valued at £1,226,828 net.
She left £50,000 to any registered charity dealing with research into and the treatment of cancer; £30,000 each to NSPCC, Save the Children, Ian Rennie Hospice at Home, £20,000 each to the Royal Opera House Trust, Royal Commonwealth Society for the Blind and Cancer Relief Macmillan Fund.

Joan Isabelle Dorey, of Emsworth, Hampshire, left estate valued at £1,524,292 net.
She left shares in her residuary estate to RNIB, RNLI, WRNS Benevolent Fund, PDSA and CPRE.

James Dalgetty Dougal, of Heddon on the Wall, Newcastle upon Tyne, left estate valued at £1,422,666 net.
He left £5,000 to the RSPCA and to the PDSA.

Marjorie Mona Hayton, of Milnthorpe, Cumbria, left estage valued at £503,231 net.
She left shares in her estate to Kendal Mountain Rescue, Arthritis and Rheumatism Council for Research, British Heart Foundation, RNLI, local conservation, c/o South Lakeland District Council, Kendal, Marie Curie Cancer Care, Cancer Research Campaign, Christie's Hospital, Withington, Manchester, and the Friends of Westmorland Hospital.

Josephine Fletcher, of Sheffield, South Yorkshire, left estate valued at £698,355 net.

Geoffrey Thomas Bell, of Kirk Ella, East Yorkshire, left estate valued at £923,665 net.
He left £10,000 to Cancer Research Campaign and to Kirk Ella Parish PCC; £3,000 to the Sailors' Families Society; £2,000 each to Friends of Wydale, Hull Boys Club; RNLI, and York Diocesan Board of Finance; £1,000 each to RAF Benevolent Fund; NSPCC, and Age Concern; £500 each to Hull and East Riding Institute for the Blind, Holy Trinity Church PCC of Hull and Church Army.

Margaret Kelland Littlewood, of Gainsborough, Lincolnshire, left estate valued at £512,256 net.

Julia Abigail Oldridge, of Barton on Humber, North Lincolnshire, left estate valued at £570,075 net.

Nancy Kathleen Potter, of Harrogate, North Yorkshire, left estate valued at £546,964 net.

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BIRTHS

CARROLL - On December 14th at The Portland Hospital, to Lynn (née Radcliffe) and Bob, a son, Jordan Alexander, their pride and joy.

HABGOOD - On December 14th at The Portland Hospital, to Woodley and Rob, a daughter, Catherine Holleman (7lbs 11oz). A granddaughter for Mr and Mrs Richard Chaffin of Tuscaloosa, Alabama, and Mr and Mrs Lawrence Habgood of Malvern, Pennsylvania.

HOFF - On December 10th at The Portland Hospital, to Elli (née Weymann) and Alex, a son, Maximilian, a beautiful baby.

LEWTHWAITE - On 6th December at home, to Lucy (née Morgan) and Adrian, a daughter, Frances Anne Margaret, a sister for Hester and Katherine.

ROBSON - On December 14th 1997, to Siân (née Davies) and Alex, a son, William.

DEATHS

BARFIELD - Arthur Owen, Poet, Author, Solicitor, died on 14th December 1997 very peacefully at The Walhatch Hotel, Forest Row, East Sussex, aged 99. Cremation at Surrey and Sussex Crematorium, Crawley, at 3pm on 18th December. Requiescat In Pace.

BARRINGTON - On 14th December in St Barnabas Hospice. Douglas Patrick (Pat) aged 79 years of Worthing, formerly with Grindlays Bank and C.M.S. Beloved husband of Monica, much loved by his daughter Penelope, with Renato and his grandchildren Alessio and Roberto. Funeral Service at Worthing Crematorium on Monday, December 22nd at 3.20 pm. No flowers please but donations for Steyne Gardens Methodist Church may be sent, c/o H.D. Tribe Ltd, 130 Broadwater Road, Worthing, West Sussex BN14 8HU. Telephone: 01903-234516.

BONFANTI - Arturo suddenly at home on Thursday 11th December. Much loved father of Susan and Ann. Requiem Mass at St Dominic's Priory, London NW5 on Friday 19th December at 9.30 am, followed by cremation at Golders Green Crematorium at 10.30 am. Enquiries to Leverton & Sons, Tel: 0171 485 1969.

DEATHS

BOOTH - John died peacefully in hospital after a short illness on 12th December. Funeral Frant Church, near Tunbridge Wells, Kent, 2.30pm Friday 19th December. Tel: (01962) 777414.

BOWEN - Peacefully on December 15th in Trebencyn Park Nursing Home, Abergavenny, Evelyn Mary (formerly of Llanllowell House, near Usk). The dearly beloved wife of the late E.L.P. Bowen, dearest mother of Elizabeth and Marguerite and their families. Funeral on Saturday 20th December 1997, service at Llanllowell Church at 11 am. Interment to follow within the churchyard. Floral tributes and all enquiries to Edward Jones and Daughter, Castle Parade, Usk, tel: (01291) 672042.

BREDIN - Jacqueline much loved mother of Corynne died Saturday 13th December 1997. Will be greatly missed by her many friends. Service to be held 1.15 pm on Monday 22nd December at St Peter's Church, Boxted, Essex. Flowers may be sent to Hunnaball Funeral Services, 41 Mersea Road, Colchester, Essex.

BRICE - Frances (née Hodges), beloved wife of William, died peacefully at home in her sleep on December 12th 1997. No flowers please, donations if desired to the Parkinson's Disease Society. Requiem Mass at St Catherine's, Didsbury on Friday December 19th at 12 noon, followed by interment at Burnley Cemetery at 2 pm. All funeral enquiries to Co-op Funeral Services, Chorlton, tel: (0161) 881-2212.

BROWN - Nancy Elizabeth (née Bairstow) on 14th December 1997 in Leominster, aged 90, late of Tewkesbury. Devoted wife of the late George Stanley Brown and dearly loved mother of Stephen, Elizabeth and Richard and grandmother. Cremation for family and friends at 11.15am Tuesday 23rd December 1997 at Hereford Crematorium, followed by a Service of Thanksgiving at the Priory Church, Leominster at 2 pm. Family flowers only but donations to Christian Aid c/o T. Lewis & Sons, 11 Broad Street, Leominster. Memorial Choral Evensong in Tewkesbury Abbey to be arranged in January 1998.

CLEMENTS - On 13th December 1997 peacefully, Peter Larby aged 79. Loving husband of Margaret, dearest dad of John, Guy and Simon, also a much loved grandad. Service at St Peter's Church, Budleigh Salterton, Thursday December 18th at 2 pm followed by cremation. All enquiries to Palmers Funeral Service 01395 442252.

COX-JOHNSON - Peacefully on Monday December 15th 1997. Judith Mary much loved wife of Richard, mother of James, Tim, Kevin and Nick, grandmother of Frederick, Ben, and Eliza. Funeral Service at Hampstead Parish Church, Church Row, NW3 on Monday December 22nd at 12 noon. Family flowers only please.

CROSSLEY - Peter W. Peacefully in Durban on December 14th. Beloved husband of Barbara, father of David, Nicholas and Sarah. Family flowers only.

DAWSON - Phyllis on 9th December 1997, wife of the late Roger Henry Dawson and mother of John and Jennifer. At her own request a private funeral has taken place.

DEWAR - David, on 15th December 1997 at Lewisham Hospital, peacefully, aged 79. Beloved father of Ian and Diane, grandfather of James, partner of Betty and father-in-law of Lynn. Service at All Saints Church, Blackheath, London SE3 at 11 am on Tuesday 23rd December and afterwards at the Clarendon Hotel, Blackheath. All friends welcome. Flowers to Francis Chappell & Sons, 4 Lee High Road, Lewisham SE13 5LQ or donations to The British Heart Foundation or Alzheimer's Disease Society.

GALUSTIAN - Haig died peacefully on 9th December. Much loved father of Richard, Alfred and Hilda.

GAZITUA - Emma (née de Vries), aged 88 peacefully on Saturday December 13th 1997, in London. Widow of Guillermo Gazitua, beloved mother of Margarita, Betty and Mario, grandmother of Craig, Harriet, Christopher, Tina, Edward, Patrick, Andrew, David and Stephen, and great-grandmother of Becky and Jenny. Funeral on Tuesday December 23rd at 11am at Our Lady of Grace and St Edward, 247 Chiswick High Road, W4.

GORDON - Huntly Commander Royal Navy died unexpectedly at the age of 46 on 6th December 1997. Much loved husband of Feather and devoted father of James and Amelia, greatly missed by all who knew him. A family funeral will be held at Cardross Crematorium on Friday 19th December 1997. A Public Memorial Service will be held on Friday 30th January 1998 at St Michael and All Angels Episcopal Church, William Street, Helensburgh at 2 pm. No flowers please. Donations (if desired) in lieu of flowers should be sent to Tenovus, The Cancer Charity, c/o Robertson & Weir Funeral Directors, 17/23 West King Street, Helensburgh G84 8UN.

HICKMAN - Constance Margaret (Peggy) (née Fordham) devoted mother of Jonathan, mother-in-law of Debra and loving grandmother of Georgie and Isobel. Funeral at St Peter and St Paul's Church, Steeple Morden on Friday 19th December at 12 noon. Gone to join her beloved son David.

HIRST - Barbara Elizabeth unexpectedly but peacefully on 11th December 1997 aged 70. Much loved and missed, mother, grandmother and sister. Funeral Service 19th December Holy Trinity Church 11.30 am, Coleman's Hatch, nr Hartfield, Sussex. Flowers if desired to E.R. Hickmott, 41 Grove Hill Road, Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN1 1SD or donations to British Heart Foundation, 14 Fitzhardinge Street, London W1H 4DH or Hospice in the Weald, Allen Gardiner House, Pembury Road, Tunbridge Wells TN2 3ZU.

LEEK - Marjorie (née Hannan) on December 13th peacefully at home after a long and courageously fought illness. Beloved wife of Stan, much loved mother of Jonathan, Kate and Helen. Service at St Etheldreda's, Hatfield, at 12 noon on Tuesday December 23rd.

LINCOLN - E. Brian D.L., son of the late Tommy and Doris, suddenly and peacefully at home on December 15th 1997, formerly of Underhill Road, Cleadon Village, near Sunderland, Tyne and Wear. Funeral Service to be held at St Hilda's Church, Market Place, South Shields on Monday December 22nd at 12.45 pm, followed by cremation. No flowers please. Donations if desired to the Sail Training Association Northumbria, c/o Peter Hall, 2 Kingsland, Jesmond, Newcastle NE2 3AL.

MARSHALL - Joan Kathleen ("Butty") (née Grubb) peacefully on December 15th aged 89. Former General Manager of the Basingstoke Canal, much loved mother and grandmother. Funeral at St Mary's Church, Winchfield, on Monday 22nd December at 1 pm. Family and close friends' flowers only. Donations in her memory to RSPCA and Basingstoke Canal Boats for the Disabled c/o A & W Goddard Ltd, Kent Road, Fleet, Hants. (01252) 616431.

McCLELLAN - Nigel William on December 14th, deeply loved and mourned by his wife Ida, his children and his grandchildren. Requiem Mass at St Aloysius Church, 25 Woodstock Road, Oxford on Saturday December 20th at 10 am. Family flowers only, donations, if desired, to Save the Children.

OSBORNE - Albert Edward (Bertie) formerly of Cobham, Surrey, peacefully on December 14th. So very dearly loved husband of Jean and adored father of Angela. Service at Christ Church, Dore, Sheffield on Monday 22nd December at 12.15 pm followed by cremation at Hutcliffe Wood Crematorium. Enquiries to John Heath & Sons Funeral Directors, tel: 0114 2722222.

PATERSON - Frank William Anderson formerly of the Shell Oil Company suddenly at home in Angmering, W. Sussex, on December 14th aged 79. Funeral at Worthing Crematorium 3.40 pm on Monday December 22nd. Family flowers only. Donations if desired to National Canine Defence League c/o H.D. Tribe Ltd, Funeral Directors, 63 Sea Lane, Rustington, W. Sussex.

RIDGE - Rosa peacefully on Saturday 13th December in her 84th year. Widow of Bill. Greatly loved mother of Paul and Susan, mother-in-law of Clare and grandmother of Theo, Eleanor and Simon. Funeral Randalls Park Crematorium, Leatherhead, Surrey, Monday 22nd December 2 pm.

SILVER - Nancy (née Pym) died on 13th December 1997, dear wife of Dr. Christopher Silver and much loved mother of Eleanor, Angela, Paul and Susannah. Formerly Headmistress of Streatham Hill and Clapham High School and of Putney High School, GPDST. Funeral Service to be held at St Mary-the-Virgin, Primrose Hill, NW3 on 22nd December at 2 pm. Family flowers only. Donations, if desired, to: Minerva Fund GPDST (1872), 100 Rochester Row, London SW1P 1JP.

TOZER - Doreen Cooper (née Cole) of Walberswick and Southwold died on Sunday 14th December 1997 aged 83 years. Beloved wife of the late Bernard Gilbert Tozer and dearly loved mother and grandmother. Funeral Service at Cambridge City Crematorium (West Chapel) on Monday 22nd December 1997 at 12 noon. Family flowers only, enquiries to Ely Funeral Service 01353 666566.

TURNBULL - On 13th December 1997, at Budleigh Salterton, Devon, Phipps Turnbull OBE TD FRTPI, aged 81, beloved husband of Griselda, much loved father and grandfather. Private cremation. No flowers please. A Service of Thanksgiving will be held at All Saints', East Budleigh on Friday, 16th January at 11.30 am. Any donations to Budleigh Salterton Health Centre Charity Fund, 1 The Lawn, Budleigh Salterton, Devon EX9 6LS.

VATIKIOTIS - Professor P.J. died peacefully at his home in Oxford on Monday 15th December after a long illness. Previously Resident of Pinner, Middlesex. The funeral will take place on Friday 19th December at 11.15 am at Oxford Crematorium. No flowers please, donations if desired, to the Cardiac Unit John Radcliffe Hospital c/o A.W. Bruce, 29 Rogers Street, Summertown, Oxford OX2 7JS. Tel: 01865 310907.

WHITTON - Vera Dorothy beloved mother of Mary and Robert. Grandmother to Adam, Craig, James, Ross and Scott. Died peacefully on Sunday December 14th aged 82. Service to be held at St Christopher's Hinchley Wood 1.30 pm and Randalls Park Crematorium 2.30 pm on Monday December 22nd. Flowers to Longhurst, Epsom, Surrey.

YOULE - Idina Gwendoline Burgess (née Winn), on 15th December 1997, peacefully, in her 97th year. Widow of Cyril Youle, greatly loved mother of Robin and Virginia, mother-in-law of Jennie, devoted grandmother of Rupert and Fiona. A rich and generous life. Cremation private. All enquiries to T.A. Ellement & Son Ltd., 21 Bridge Street, Pinner, Middlesex HA5 3HR. Tel. 0181 866 0324. No flowers, please but donations, if desired, to The League of Friends, MFRH, c/o The Princess Alexandra Home, Common Road, Stanmore, Middlesex HA7 3JE.

IN MEMORIAM — WAR

BUNCE - Robert and the crew of HMS Firedrake sunk this day 1942 by U211. A father dearly missed, a grandfather never met.

IN MEMORIAM — PRIVATE

BOSWELL - Erica died 17th December 1996. Remembered with love by her children and grandchildren.

HOLMES - John died 17th December 1985. A loved son of Geo and Marie.

SAYERS - Dorothy L. on December 17th 1957. "After 40 years still a living force." Dorothy L Sayers Society Hurstpierpoint BN6 9JE.

GOLDEN ANNIVERSARIES

CHAVASSE - On 17th December 1947 at the British Embassy Belgrade, Capt. Edgar Chavasse, Camerons, to Hélène, daughter of Col. and Mme. Nikodije Bogdanovitch. In Abersoch LL53 7ER.

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هكذا من الإصل

STUBBY KAYE

Stubby Kaye, American actor and singer, died in Los Angeles on December 15, aged 79. He was born on November 11, 1918.

Stubby Kaye, left, as Nicely-Nicely in a scene from the 1955 film version of *Guys and Dolls*

Stubby Kaye was famous primarily for the performance of just one song in just one show: in 1950 he made his Broadway debut creating the role of Nicely-Nicely Johnson in *Guys and Dolls*, and stopped the show with his powerhouse rendition of the spoof spiritual *Sit Down, You're Rockin' the Boat*. The beginning was perfect. He was of a considerable girth, even then, and exploited it to the full: when he was reprising the role in the film version (alongside Marlon Brando and Frank Sinatra), the film's producer Sam Goldwyn kept circling him suspiciously to check that he was not losing weight, and when Kaye protested that he weighed the same as he always had, Goldwyn replied tartly: "You'd better not lose any weight. I hired you by the pound."

Being overweight might seem a flimsy basis for showbusiness success, but Kaye had other talents which served him well. The frame helped him to produce a resonant voice, and his early work as an emcee for big bands and as a stand-up comedian honed his comic timing and ability to point a song lyric. He not only looked right in the seedy, small-time gambling world of Damon Runyon, but put over the sprightly words and bouncy melodies of Frank Loesser incomparably. All who subsequently played the role stood in his substantial shadow.

Kaye, originally Bernard Kotzin and nicknamed Stubby for obvious reasons, was born in New York and brought up against the tough background of the Bronx. He developed showbusines ambitions while still a schoolboy, and won a talent contest on the *Major Bowes Amateur Hour* on radio in 1939, appearing as a singer. It was as a singer, too, that he made his professional debut at Loew's Boulevard Theatre in the Bronx the same year, but for the next three years he toured in vaudeville as a comedian. Called up during the war, he made his first London appearances in productions to entertain the troops and to display any showcase talent that found itself temporarily in the service.

Like many British all-round entertainers who cut their teeth in Ensa, he returned home after the war to find no obvious demand for his talents. He had, in effect, to start again, and took what work was offered, going back to vaudeville (though the touring circuit had greatly declined with changing fashions), and working on the radio as compère for bands such as Charlie Barnett's and Freddie Martin's. He seemed to be getting nowhere until his big chance came up with the auditions for *Guys and Dolls*. He was immediately offered the role.

The problem with such a sensational beginning is always what to do for a follow-up. Kaye played the role in *Guys and Dolls* throughout its lengthy New York run, and during this time he made his film debut playing a small role in Gregory Ratoff's film *Taxi*, a remake of the French weepie *Sans laisser d'adresse* shot in New York.

His enormous success as Nicely-Nicely was beginning to look like a jinx rather than a blessing when in 1955 he was called to Hollywood to play Nicely-Nicely again in Joseph Mankiewicz's expensive if rather stodgy film version of *Guys and Dolls*. In 1956 he returned to Broadway to play a very similar role, Marryin' Sam, in the musical *Li'l Abner*, a rustic romp based on the American strip cartoon and composed by the team responsible for *Seven Brides for Seven Brothers*, Gene de Paul and Johnnie Mercer. Both Kaye and the show were highly successful, and when the time came for a film to be made, Kaye was called upon to reprise his original role for the cameras.

Once in Hollywood he thought he might as well stay there, and proceeded to appear in many movies, some of note and some eminently forgettable. He was seen to particular advantage in a succession of small musicals which were then still being made, among them *You Can't Run Away From It*, Dick Powell's musical remake of *It Happened One Night*; *The Cool Mikado*, a crudely modernised version of Gilbert and Sullivan which indicated how good Kaye might have been in the original; Bob Fosse's dazzling adaptation of *Sweet Charity*; and Anthony Newley's curious ego-trip musical *Can Hieronymus Merkin Ever Forget Mercy Humppe and Find True Happiness?*

One of Kaye's best-remembered roles around this time, away from musicals for once, was in the comedy western *Cat Ballou*, where he and Nat King Cole played the strolling minstrels who recur throughout the action, commenting ironically on the story.

With the decline of film musicals which became marked in the 1970s, Kaye returned to the stage, and had a notable success, on tour and in New York, with a big revival of the Twenties musical *Good News*, in which he played a character called Pooch Kearney. In 1975 he took over a leading role in the topical farce *The Ritz* from Jack Weston.

Back in the 1950s he had appeared in two short-lived television series, *Love and Marriage* and *My Sister Eileen*, and in the 1980s he did more, including the ambitious mini-series *Ellis Island*. In 1988 he was given, again for television, one of his most telling straight roles, in a new version of Clifford Odets's bitter showbusiness drama *The Big Knife*. His last memorable film role required him to be heard but not seen, as one of the cartoon characters in *Who Framed Roger Rabbit?*

Kaye died of cancer in his home in Los Angeles after a period of inactivity — but still remembered, if only as the guy who first and definitively sang *Sit Down, You're Rockin' the Boat*.

ROSLIN FRASER

Roslin Fraser, former deputy president of the Royal College of Nursing, died on December 8 aged 70. She was born on May 21, 1927.

IT WAS only when she found herself widowed in her late forties with five children to support that Roslin Fraser trained as a mental handicap nurse. She went on to become the first such nurse to be elected deputy president of the Royal College of Nursing, traditionally the bastion of teaching-hospital matrons and general-trained nurses. She also served as a Mental Health Act commissioner.

Roslin Fraser was educated at Dingwall Academy and at Edinburgh University, where she took a science degree and met her future husband. Marriage and the arrival of her first baby prompted her to give up her PhD studies, in which she had been using botanical remains to trace the drift of continents. She got a job instead with D C Thomson, the Dundee publishers of children's comics and magazines; she wrote for the *People's Friend* and helped to launch the teenagers' magazine *Annabelle*. She used her young children to model clothes for studio shots.

Eventually her husband Ian was made a consultant and the medical superintendent of the pioneering mental handicap hospital at Prudhoe, Northumberland. As a medical student he had lost a kidney to nephritis, and as a result had been unable to get life insurance. In consequence, when he died young, his widow was faced with bringing up five children on a greatly reduced income. She promptly enrolled as a student nurse at her late husband's hospital and qualified when she was 48.

The transformation from physician superintendent's wife and hostess to most junior nurse — which she undertook so that her children could have continuity in their schooling — was a dramatic one: "from dining out to wiping bottoms," as she put it. To make herself more approachable to her young colleagues she deliberately dropped Roslin for Roz, by which she was known in her second career. She also became immediately involved in her professional body, the Royal College of Nursing.

After working her way to charge nurse of the Behavioural Modification Unit at Prudhoe, she became senior nurse tutor at Balderton Hospital, Newark. She continued her involvement in the Royal College of Nursing and was twice elected deputy president. As a Mental Health Act commissioner she was involved with the special hospitals at Rampton, Ashworth and Broadmoor.

A woman of immense energy, she would set off at 4am, drive to a day's work in London and return at midnight. She travelled 35,000 miles a year. She obtained a Florence Nightingale scholarship to look at community care, which had replaced mental handicap hospital care in America as it was scheduled to do in the United Kingdom. With her son Colin, she used a camper van as office and hotel and crossed 15 states. She later attended the Women's Conference in Beijing and paid visits to Romania.

She eschewed party politics but threw herself into campaigning and lobbying on a number of issues. As well as chairing the National Alliance of Women's Organisations from 1996, she had been active on the race and ethnicity committee of the Royal College of Nursing and in the Department for Education and Employment's advisory group on older workers, where she was able to draw on her own experience of taking up a career in later life.

While working at the Royal Botanic Gardens in Edinburgh, before she abandoned her academic career, she had once been sent the stomach contents of a man found preserved in a bog, so that she could analyse the seeds he had ingested. She concluded that they pointed to ritualistic murder. It was perhaps the start of her great interest in archaeology, especially Egyptology, and in history — she was an enthusastic member of the Richard III Society. She liked researching the lives of powerful women, and was fascinated by mysteries. At 70 she was contemplating a return to writing. Having mastered a computer, she wanted to write a radio play on the Piltdown man hoax.

She is survived by her three sons and two daughters.

PROFESSOR FRANK MITCHELL

Frank Mitchell, FRS, archaeologist, died on November 25 aged 85. He was born on October 15, 1912.

FRANK MITCHELL was an outstanding scholar across a range of disciplines including geography, geology, botany, archaeology, art, ornithology and social history. His interest was the Irish landscape and the way in which generations since prehistoric times have shaped it. He combined insight and analytical ability with a gift for communicating and a modesty that made him a loved and admired figure.

George Francis Mitchell was born in Dublin, where he attended the High School. His interests in the natural sciences were encouraged by his mother and by early visits to the Natural History Museum, where he met the naturalist Arthur Wilson Stelfox. In 1930 he went to Trinity College to read arts, but he soon switched to natural sciences.

He once said that his life was "studded with lucky opportunities". The first occurred in 1934 when he was chosen to work with Professor Knud Jessen of Copenhagen, who was then beginning the first extensive programme of palaeobotanical work in Ireland. This contact provided Mitchell with one of his own continuing research interests, and his paper *Post-Boreal Pollen Diagrams from Irish Raised Bogs* in the Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy in 1956 illustrates the way he developed palaeobotanical work, particularly palynology, in Ireland.

Mitchell had joined the faculty of Trinity in 1934; he was elected a fellow in 1944, was Reader in Irish Archaeology from 1959 to 1965 and held a specially created professorship in Quarternary Studies from 1965 until 1979. On his retirement he was made an emeritus fellow. During his career he was also involved in the administration of the college, as Junior Dean, 1945-51; Registrar, 1952-66; and as a Pro-Chancellor, 1985-88.

The title of his chair reflected the width of his knowledge and in excavating a number of Mesolithic sites, including Sutton, Co Dublin, and Clonava, Lough Derravaragh, Co Westmeath, he was able to employ a multi-disciplinary approach to the study of early human settlement. A contribution to quarternary geomorphology that he was particularly proud of was the recognition that pingos — periglacial landforms produced by the freeze-thaw effect of ice — were present in Ireland.

In 1969 he and his wife Lucy bought the 18th-century Townley Hall, near Drogheda, Co Louth, which Trinity had acquired a decade earlier, and he ran it as a study centre for many years. Mitchell encouraged George Eogan's initial excavation of a Neolithic site on the Townley Hall estate and this was the forerunner of the long-term research excavation at the Knowth passage tomb complex.

He himself became more widely known through his books: *The Irish Landscape* (1976), *The Shell Guide to Reading the Irish Landscape* (1986) and *Reading the Irish Landscape* (1997), the last written with Dr Michael Ryan. His involvement in promoting palaeo-environmental work in the urban excavations in Dublin was reflected in *Archaeology and Environment in Early Dublin* (1987).

One part of the Irish landscape that he came particularly to love was Valencia Island, Co Kerry, and this was the subject of his book *Man and Environment in Valencia Island* (1989). His enjoyment in putting small areas of the landscape under the microscope can also be seen in his work on the Great Bog of Ardee, Co Louth, which he wrote with Breeda Tuite and published in the *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society* (1993).

Mitchell was president of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland, 1957-60, was elected a fellow of the Royal Society in 1973 and was president of the Royal Irish Academy from 1976 to 1979. He was a founder member of An Taisce — the National Trust for Ireland — in 1946, and served as its president from 1991 to 1993.

Frank Mitchell self-deprecatingly referred to himself as a "first-approximation man" who followed a line of interest for a while and then moved on to other themes. In doing so he often radically altered the interpretation of the landscape and opened up new fields of inquiry. *The Way that I Followed* (1990) is a fitting account of his lifelong journey wandering through the Irish landscape.

His wife died in 1987: he is survived by his two daughters.

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ON THIS DAY

December 17, 1930

The German novelist Erich Maria Remarque (1898-1970) fought through the First World War and his novel All Quiet on the Western Front *(Im Westen nicht Neues) was a world-wide success, but the film met strong criticism nearer home.*

GERMAN BAN ON 'ALL QUIET'

(FROM OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT)

BERLIN, Dec 16

The Republican "Reichsbanner" organisation, in co-operation with the German Socialist Party, last night held four mass meetings in Berlin to protest against the ban on the film *All Quiet on the Western Front*. Much greater numbers of people seem to have gathered than assembled each night in the Nollendorf Platz in support of the Nazi agitation against the film. Incidentally, the Socialist *Vorwarts*, in ironical reference to the fact that the film was banned in Germany as likely "to injure German prestige abroad" quotes a Danzig report that it has been forbidden in Poland as "crass pro-German propaganda".

The matter came up to-day in the Prussian Diet, where the Nationalists have brought in a motion of no confidence against the Premier, Herr Otto Braun, and the Minister of the Interior, Herr Severing, as representatives of a Government which was ready to protect the film throughout Prussia if it had not been banned throughout Germany. A Nationalist speaker bitterly attacked Herr Braun for stating (in the *Berliner Tageblatt* on Saturday) that he had been deeply moved by the film, that in his view it held nothing to wound a patriotic German, that he could not conceive how it could damage German prestige abroad, that it told the truth, if only part of the truth, about war, and that "a people which cannot bear the truth is surrendering itself." A Socialist Deputy, who spoke for an ex-Service men's organisation, formally protested against the ban, and remarked that Dr. Goebbels, the Nazi leader in Berlin, who led the agitation against the film, had not seen military service. There are many Germans who see in this film the War as they found it. There are others who do not, and as representative of this school one may briefly quote the views of a German Cabinet Minister who served several years at the front, as a battery commander. The film, he says in effect, shows only one side of war and the coarse and animal side at that. It ignores the idealism which, in the tightest of corners, was ever present, in an overwhelming degree. The ideal side of war — enthusiasm, sacrifice and patriotism — do not play their due part in the film. The scene in which the German shoots the Frenchman as an act of self-preservation and then begs for forgiveness gives the impression of a murderer begging for pardon. In the leave scenes the inability, known to all soldiers, to put in words the great experience of war is shown as repugnance of war. Finally the psychological effect of the film is largely influenced by the, for Germany, unfavourable outcome of the War.

FILM DENOUNCED IN AUSTRIA

VIENNA Dec 16

Austrian National Socialists have protested to the authorities against the forthcoming exhibition of the film *All Quiet on the Western Front* in Vienna and have published threats of disorders if the performance is attempted.

THE TIMES TODAY

WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 17 1997

NEWS

Sotheby's smuggling clampdown

■ Sotheby's is to tighten sale procedures to make sure it is as "clean as a whistle" after an inquiry into allegations of smuggling art treasures. The auction house also said that it would not handle anything where there was any suspicion that it might have been looted abroad.

The new code of conduct was announced at a staff meeting after an $11 million investigation that staff had been rigging auctions and illegally exporting works of art ....**Pages 1, 8**

Warrant for arrest of Labour MP

■ A warrant for the arrest of Mohammed Sarwar, the suspended Labour MP for Glasgow Govan, was issued on charges of election fraud. Mr Sarwar, 44, the millionaire businessman who became Britain's first Muslim MP on May 1, was due to appear voluntarily at in a Glasgow Court .. **Page 1**

Chicken flu scare

Chicken flu, which has already killed two people, may now be spreading person-to-person, health authorities in Hong Kong believe. If so, the danger of a world-wide epidemic will be greatly increased ....**Page 1**

Lawrence case

Three youths who tried to "terrify and intimidate" the key witness in the Philip Lawrence murder trial were jailed .... **Pages 1, 7**

Beef rebellion

The Government dismissed predictions of mass civil disobedience by meat traders after it faced a backlash at home and in Europe over its ban on sale of beef on the bone ....**Page 2**

IRA men guilty

IRA terrorists who plotted to devastate London with a series of massive lorry bombs were jailed for up to 25 years at the Old Bailey............................ **Page 4**

Parents jailed

A couple who escaped a murder charge over the death of their baby daughter because of a legal loophole were jailed for seven and five years ....**Page 5**

Year off advice

School-leavers were advised to take a year off, rather than rush to university, after research showed that the £178 million cost of dropouts would be cut by better preparation .... **Page 6**

Badger cull

Badgers are to be culled in trial areas to find the best way of halting the increase in tuberculosis among dairy cattle...... **Page 9**

Tory poll

Tory MPs are to hold a formal ballot for the first time this century to settle the future of party leadership elections........**Page 10**

Currency summit

A summit of the shellshocked leaders of the crumbling former "tiger" economies in South-East Asia ended on a sombre note, with scant progress in solving the problems of the region's tumbling currencies.......................**Page 12**

Mandela attack

Nelson Mandela signalled a shift in African National Congress policy away from racial reconciliation to an attack on South Africa's "liberal" whites...............**Page 13**

Art collection

After a 13-year restoration costing £7 million, a 500-year-old Italian palazzo containing one of the finest collections of Roman sculpture and art in the world opened its doors.........................**Page 14**

Thatcher model

Venezuelans, weary of veteran politicians who are tainted by corruption scandals, appear to want a six-foot former Miss Universe, who regards Baroness Thatcher as her "role model", as their next president.........................**Page 15**

Clark accused of 'colossal vanity'

■ Alan Clark's "colossal vanity" caused him to complain when a series of spoof journals appeared under his name, the High Court was told. The MP who is seeking damages and an injunction preventing the *Evening Standard* from further publication of "Alan Clark's Secret Political Diary", took his action to stamp out ridicule he richly deserved, it was claimed... **Page 3**

VASILY FEDOSENKO

As Britain experienced Eastern European temperatures yesterday, a bather plunged into the freezing waters of a lake in Minsk. Page 1

BUSINESS

Prudential: Britain's biggest insurance group yesterday again received stinging criticism from industry regulators, this time over the group's direct sales force .... **Page 23**

Bass: The brewer yesterday sold 1,400 pubs for £564 million and said it would return £850 million to shareholders .... **Page 23**

Danka: Shares in Danka Business Systems more than halved, from 510p to 217½p, after the company shocked the stockmarket with a profits warning................. **Page 23**

Markets: The FTSE 100 rose 81.6 to 5203.4. The sterling trade-weighted index rose from 102.4 to 103.0 after going up from $1.6329 to $1.6335 and rising from DM2.8904 to DM2.9151 .... **Page 26**

SPORT

Football: Francis Lee, the chairman of Manchester City, is considering selling his stake in the club, a move that would open the way for a takeover.............................. **Page 44**

Cricket: West Indies will meet England in the final of the Champions Trophy in Sharjah. Charlotte Edwards scored 173 not out in the women's World Cup ....**Page 41**

Rugby union: Jim Fleming, who refereed the classic drawn match between England and New Zealand, called for refereeing to become a full-time profession after the 1999 World Cup .... **Page 40**

Boxing: Muhammad Ali and Michael Jackson, will be at ringside in New York to see Naseem Hamed defend his world featherweight title.................................... **Page 39**

TV ghosts: Twenty-five years ago we settled down to a televisual Christmas feast of religious programmes, opera, ballet, comedy and sitcom. How things have changed .... **Page 30**

Now booking: Clive Davis finds the hot spots on the bookshelf and picks the best of the year's tomes for jazz lovers, from a truly monumental anthology to *A Century of Jazz*; and Richard Cork finds plenty of Christmas gift ideas for discerning art lovers in books on everything from the Italian Renaissance to body-painting .... **Pages 30, 31**

News smash: Hecht and MacArthur's Broadway classic *The Front Page* gets a pacy, funny staging at the Donmar and it would be absurd to moralise .... **Page 32**

Open wide: Show the same set of teeth to dentists around the country and the type and cost of the work to be done will vary dramatically. Tony Dawe investigates ....**Page 16**

Paranoia: "It is unseemly for whipping boys to come on strong with the *Today* programme, like stage gangsters or Ealing comedy trade unionists, warning of suspending co-operation." Nigella Lawson on Labour paranoia ....**Page 16**

Pay up: In America, stores have computerised gift registers for children, and even in Britain parents have to deal with the click-on, payout spirit of Christmas **Page 17**

Beware: Poaching bosses may be acceptable but tempers invariably flare when secretaries are lured away by rivals businesses **Page 34**

Idyll dream: Many city folk dream of a life without traffic jams, noise and pollution. But one family who tried the good life, has returned to the city ....**Page 35**

Rather than trying to reassure the world about Yeltsin's health by providing exhaustive briefings, the Kremlin is filtering news through a web of spokespeople, heavilyedited footage and exasperatingly incomplete announcements

— *Moscow Times*

TOMORROW

IN THE TIMES

■ FILMS

Geoff Brown feels a little jaded after seeing the bandit-beating Alex D. Linz in *Home Alone 3*

■ BOOKS

***Times* reviewers enthuse about the books that have most influenced them**

RADIO & TV

Preview: He was a charismatic President but he kept dangerous company: *Secret Lives: JFK* (Channel 4) **Review:** Peter Barnard on TV motormouths ....**Pages 38, 39**

OPINION

A reasonable bid

The benefit to all London's auction houses of cleaning their business is clearer now than it has ever been ....**Page 19**

Tories for democracy

The 1922 Committee should concentrate on 2002 and what it can do to advance the party's prospects. That requires a 100 per cent — not 35 per cent — commitment to democracy...............................**Page 19**

Cry wolf in earnest

Beside the ox, the ass and the sheep, the wolf is an unusual candidate for Christmas benevolence. But this is the last chance for the Ethiopian wolf.......................**Page 19**

COLUMNS

SIMON JENKINS

Bosnia is becoming Britain's second Northern Ireland. In Ulster, military intervention in support of the civil power was to be strictly temporary. That was a quarter century ago ....**Page 18**

ANTHONY BARNETT

Mr Blair has called for a modern Britain. The country is ahead of him and now has a settled desire for democracy, one that will eventually find its expression in written constitutional words ....**Page 18**

ALAN COREN

Think about it. A tenner will buy you, and the Hagues, a very acceptable egg-cup.........................**Page 18**

PETER RIDDELL

The real nanny state is the one run by the Treasury. However much the Government talks about the importance of decentralisation, the Treasury remains determined not to surrender central control over spending..................................**Page 10**

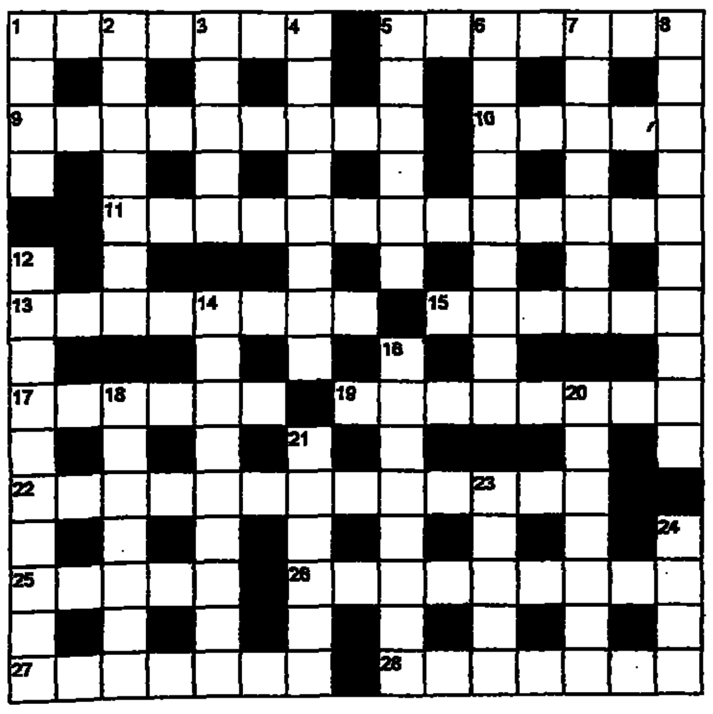
OBITUARIES

Stubby Kaye, actor; **Professor Frank Mitchell,** archaeologist; **Roslin Fraser,** nurse.................**Page 21**

LETTERS

Beef ban; benefit cuts; rural deprivation; renewable energy; Rudolf the red-nosed reindeer; sexism and bowls; gardens in the green belt; Woodrow Wyatt ....**Page 19**

THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 20,665



ACROSS

1 Drug hidden in crevice in beam (7).
5 Catches sight of hot puddings? (7).
9 Lots came swirling round head of psychic? (9).
10 Lightweight attack, short of power up front (5).
11 When material shatters in pot, possibly (8,5).
13 Refuse to accept wrestling manoeuvre that's forbidden (5,3).
15 Novel form of hat providing cover (6).
17 Hens fluttering round me get caught in netting (6).
19 Cunning article that's fatally attractive for insects (3-5).
22 Forever giving consecutive jail sentences? (4,5,4).
25 Liner such as Queen Elizabeth II (5).
26 Superior tonsure? (1,3,5).
27 Being no longer in service, rule of Captain Corcoran's broken? (7).
28 I'd returned and left girl in a difficult situation (7).

DOWN

1 Favourites raised the pace (4).
2 Leader of criminals to be imprisoned by soldiers for over four weeks (7).
3 Combination of drinks and drug is a mistake (5).
4 Appreciating it's hard to get in all the petrol you need? (8).
5 Citing meeting of North America and China? (6).
6 One has men on board ready for an opponent (5-4).
7 Open with a play by Shaw (7).
8 Wear this out in the street, a casual garment (10).
12 Origins of some trendy residences newly erected getting urban acceptablity (6,4).
14 They may be shown up in learned fields (9).
16 Complete eighteen holes (3-5).
18 Indistinctly pronounces a Welsh place name (7).
20 Seal future fate of Brit about to undertake operation again (7).
21 Ply part of the coast (6).
23 Exhausted? Quite the reverse, when everything's taken into account (2,3).
24 It's a type of hill, some say (but only some) (4).

Times Two Crossword, page 44

Solution to Puzzle No 20,664

E	S	P	A	D	R	I	L	L	E	S		B	U	S
G		R		U		N		A		Y		E		T
G	R	A	N	D	A	U	N	T		M	I	S	E	R
		W		G		N		C		P		E		I
C	O	N	T	E	N	D		H	O	T	H	E	A	D
A				O		A				O		C		U
L	E	M	O	N		T	R	I	U	M	P	H	A	L
L		A				E		N				E		A
S	U	S	P	E	N	D	E	D		C	A	R	A	T
T		O		P				I		O				E
O	R	C	H	I	D	S		C	A	N	V	A	S	S
M		H		T		C		A		T		W		
I	R	I	S	H		R	A	T	I	O	N	A	L	E
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HIGHEST & LOWEST

Yesterday: Highest day temp: Barra, Outer Hebrides, 8C (46F); lowest day max: Folkestone, Kent, and Dunkeswell Aerodrome, Devon, 1C (34F); highest rainfall: Isle of Wight, 0.07in; highest sunshine: Anglesey, 5.1hr.

NEWSPAPERS SUPPORT RECYCLING
Recycled paper made up 43.6% of the raw material for UK newspapers in the second half of 1996

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FORECAST

☐ **General:** it will be windy and very cold over the whole country. The southern half of England and Wales will have snow for a time, but the snow will turn to rain as milder air spreads from the south. The northern half of England and Wales will have isolated snow flurries at first, but more widespread snow is likely before milder weather arrives in the evening. Scotland and Northern Ireland will have a few wintry showers, mainly in the east, but sleet and snow will move into southern parts towards evening.

Tonight England, Wales and Northern Ireland will become much milder, but remain overcast, wet and windy. Scotland will have heavy sleet and drifting snow, turning to rain later.

☐ **London, SE England, Central S England, Channel Isles, SW England, S Wales:** overcast with outbreaks of sleet and snow, quickly turning to rain by midday. A strong southeasterly wind. Max 9C (48F), mildest in the evening.

☐ **E Anglia, E Midlands, E England, W Midlands, N Wales, NW England, Lake District, Isle of Man, Central N England, NE England, N Ireland:** bitterly cold at first with heavy sleet and snow spreading north during the day, with drifting on the hills. The snow will turn to rain later as it becomes milder everywhere. A strong easterly wind. Max 8C (46F).

☐ **Borders, Edinburgh & Dundee, Aberdeen, Central Highlands, Moray Firth, NE Scotland, Orkney, Shetland:** mostly cloudy with a few light sleet or snow flurries. A strong to gale force easterly wind. Max 6C (43F).

☐ **SW Scotland, Glasgow, Argyll, NW Scotland:** mostly dry with a few bright intervals. A strong to gale force easterly wind. Max 6C (43F).

☐ **Republic of Ireland:** rain, sleet or snow moving north. Becoming drier but remaining misty. Wind easterly, strong, locally gale force. Max 6C (43F).

☐ **Outlook:** much milder everywhere, but unsettled with rain followed by sunny spells and showers. It will become much less windy by Friday.

AROUND BRITAIN YESTERDAY

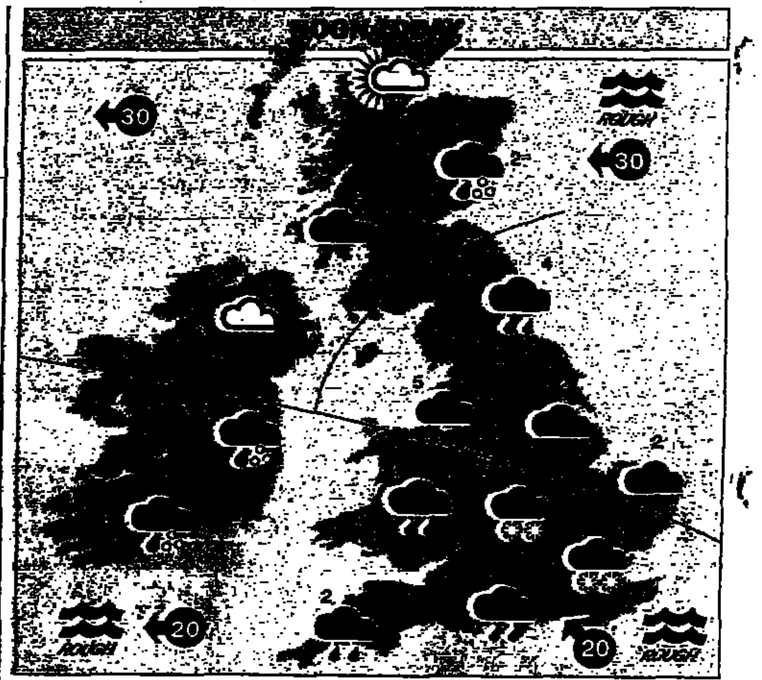
24 hrs to 5 pm: b=bright; c=cloud; d=drizzle; ds=dust storm; du=dull; f=fair; fg=fog; g=gale; h=hail; r=rain; sh=shower; sl=sleet; sn=snow; s=sun; t=thunder

	Sun hrs	Rain in	Max C	F			Sun hrs	Rain in	Max C	F	
Aberdeen	-	0.01	7	45	du	Leeds	0.7	0.01	5	41	c
Anglesey	5.1	-	6	43	b	Lerwick	-	-	6	43	c
Aspatria	5.1	-	5	41	s	Leuchars	0.2	0.02	7	45	sh
Aviemore	-	0.01	4	39	c	Littlehmptn	-	0.01	2	36	sn
Belfast	4.2	0.01	6	43	b	London	-	0.01	3	37	sn
Birmingham	0.2	0.01	3	37	c	Lowestoft	-	-	3	37	c
Bognor R	-	0.01	2	36	sn	Manchester	4.7	0.01	5	41	s
Bournem'th	0.2	0.01	3	37	sn	Margate	-	0.01	1	34	sn
Bristol	-	0.01	3	37	sn	Minehead	-	0.01	2	36	sn
Buxton	0.6	0.01	3	37	c	Morecambe	4.7	-	6	43	s
Cardiff	-	0.01	3	37	sn	Newcastle	0.2	0.01	6	43	c
Clacton	-	-	2	36	c	Newquay	X				
Cleethorpes	-	0.01	6	43	g	Norwich	-	-	3	37	du
Colwyn Bay	0.2	-	5	41	c	Oxford	-	0.01	2	36	sn
Cromer	-	-	5	41	c	Penzance	X	0.01	4	39	du
Dunbar	X					Poole	0.1	0.01	4	39	sn
Eastbourne	-	0.01	2	36	sn	Prestatyn	X	0.01	5	41	sn
Edinburgh	0.8	-	7	45	c	Ross-o-wye	-	0.01	3	37	sn
Eskdalemuir	0.2	0.01	3	37	b	Saunton Snd	0.3	-	3	37	du
Exmouth	-	0.01	3	37	sn	Scarboro'	1.3	0.01	5	41	b
Falmouth	-	-	5	41	c	Shrewsbury	X				
Fishguard	4.6	-	5	41	s	Skegness	0.3	-	6	43	c
Folkestone	-	0.01	1	34	sn	Southend	-	-	5	41	sn
Glasgow	2.5	-	7	45	s	Southport	2.7	-	5	41	s
Guernsey	X					Southsea	0.2	-	3	37	sn
Hastings	-	0.01	1	34	c	Stornoway	5.1	-	7	45	s
Hayling I.	-	0.01	2	36	sn	Swanage	-	0.01	4	39	sn
Herne Bay	-	0.01	4	39	du	Teignmouth	-	0.01	5	41	sn
Hove	-	0.01	2	36	sn	Tenby	5.0	-	5	41	s
Hunstanton	X	-	5	41	c	Tiree	3.8	-	7	45	s
Isle-of-man	1.6	-	6	43	g	Torquay	-	-	7	45	g
Isle-of-wight	-	0.07	2	36	sn	Tynemouth	-	-	6	43	du
Jersey	0.4	0.01	2	36	sn	Weston-s-mare	X				
Kinloss	0.6	0.01	5	41	c	Weymouth	-	-	3	37	sn

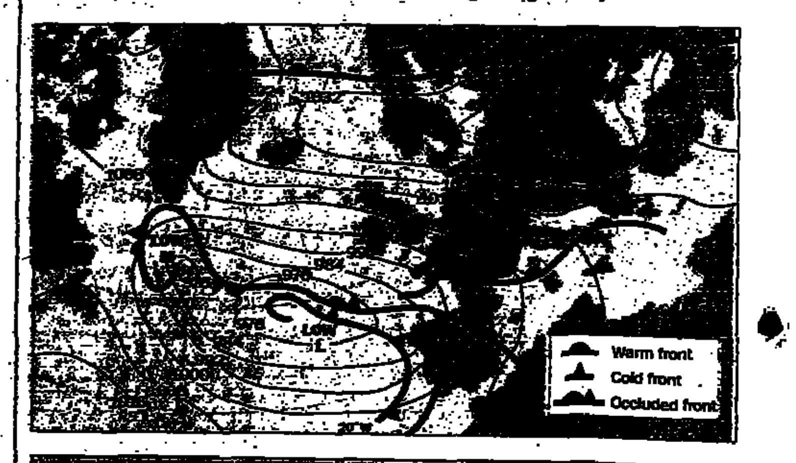
ABROAD

Ajaccio	12	54	f	Corfu	12	54	f	Majorca	14	57	f	S Fr'sco	14	57	s
Akrotiri	18	64	c	C'phagn	0	32	c	Malaga	16	61	s	S Paulo	X		
Alex'dria	19	66	s	Dublin	6	43	c	Malta	15	59	s	Salzburg	1	34	c
Algiers	13	55	s	Dubrovnik	9	48	s	Melb'rne	19	66	c	Santiago	30	86	s
Amst'dm	3	37	c	Faro	16	61	s	Mexico C	X			Seoul	6	43	s
Athens	8	46	r	Florence	9	48	f	Miami	17	63	s	Sing'por	32	90	f
B Aires	23	73	s	Frankfurt	2	36	c	Milan	5	41	f	St'kholm	-2	28	c
Bahrain	19	66	s	Funchal	20	68	f	Montreal	-11	12	X	Strasb'rg	3	37	c
Bangkok	32	90	s	Geneva	2	36	c	Moscow	-26	-15	s	Sydney	25	77	s
Barbados	28	82	c	Gibraltar	16	61	s	Munich	0	32	sn	Tangier	19	66	s
Barcelona	12	54	f	Helsinki	-8	18	s	N York	3	37	s	Tel Aviv	20	68	s
Beirut	20	68	s	Hong K	23	73	s	Nairobi	24	75	f	Tenerife	25	77	c
Belgrade	0	32	sn	Innsbrck	0	32	f	Naples	11	52	f	Tokyo	15	59	s
Berlin	-3	27	sn	Istanbul	12	54	f	Nice	10	50	f	Toronto	7	45	s
Bermuda	17	63	c	Jeddah	31	88	s	Oslo	1	34	c	Tunis	15	59	s
Biarritz	8	46	s	Jo'burg	24	75	f	Paris	4	39	c	Valencia	12	54	s
Borde'x	5	41	f	L Angels	16	61	f	Peking	9	48	s	Vanc'ver	9	48	f
Brussels	3	37	c	L Palmas	22	72	c	Perth	32	90	s	Venice	8	46	s
Budapest	-1	30	sn	Le Tquet	4	39	f	Prague	-4	25	sn	Vienna	-3	27	sn
Cairo	21	70	s	Lisbon	13	55	c	Reykjavik	10	50	r	Warsaw	-11	12	f
Cape Tn	24	75	s	Locarno	6	43	f	Rhodes	11	52	f	Wash'ton	6	43	s
Ch'church	25	77	X	Luxembg	2	36	f	Rio de J	31	88	f	Wel'ngton	20	68	X
Chicago	6	43	s	Luxor	23	73	s	Riyadh	17	63	s	Zurich	1	34	c
Cologne	3	37	r	Madrid	5	41	s	Rome	9	48	f				

Temperatures at midday local time on Monday. X = not available.



Changes to the chart below from noon: high S will slowly decline; lows L and M will remain slow moving and gradually fill



TODAY	AM	HT	PM	HT	TODAY	AM	HT	PM	HT
London Bridge	03.15	7.4	15.32	7.5	Leith	03.57	5.8	16.19	5.7
Aberdeen	02.37	4.5	14.57	4.4	Liverpool	00.24	9.7	12.45	9.8
Avonmouth	08.41	13.7	21.08	13.4	Lowestoft	10.57	2.6	23.17	2.8
Belfast	00.16	3.6	12.34	3.7	Margate	01.18	4.8	13.36	4.9
Cardiff	08.27	12.6	20.52	12.4	Milford Haven	07.42	7.1	20.05	6.9
Devonport	07.19	5.6	19.44	5.4	Newquay	06.33	7.1	18.57	6.9
Dover	00.12	6.8	12.29	6.8	Oban	06.57	4.1	19.29	3.9
Dublin (N Wall)	00.48	4.3	13.08	4.3	Penzance	06.02	5.7	18.23	5.5
Falmouth	06.50	5.4	19.15	5.2	Portland	08.13	2.3	20.42	2.1
Greenock	01.53	3.6	13.59	3.8	Portsmouth	00.29	4.8	12.46	4.8
Harwich	01.06	4.2	13.28	4.2	Shoreham	00.21	6.4	12.38	6.4
Holyhead	11.50	5.8	-	-	Southampton	-	-	12.17	4.7
Hull (Albert D)	07.42	8.9	20.02	8.7	Swansea	07.44	9.8	20.05	9.5
Ilfracombe	07.26	9.5	19.50	9.2	Tees	04.58	5.6	17.18	5.5
King's Lynn	07.47	7.2	20.06	7.0	Walton-on-N	00.57	4.3	13.15	4.4

Sun rises: 8.01 am
Sun sets: 3.52 pm
Moon sets 10.09 am
Moon rises 7.48 pm
Last quarter December 21

London 3.52 pm to 8.02 am
Bristol 4.02 pm to 8.12 am
Edinburgh 3.38 pm to 8.40 am
Manchester 3.50 pm to 8.21 am
Penzance 4.20 pm to 8.17 am

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BUSINESS EDITOR Patience Wheatcroft WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 17 1997

Moyne company sued over unpaid car bills

Jon Ashworth investigates the murky dealings surrounding the Trustor investment debacle

The company used by Peter Mattsson and Thomas Jisander

SWEDISH businessmen working with Lord Moyne spent up to £40,000 on chauffeur-driven cars in the six weeks before their arrest in connection with an alleged £50 million fraud at Trustor, the Swedish investment company.

Invoices seen by *The Times* show that Peter Mattsson and Thomas Jisander ran up £1,882 on an American stretch limousine, and regularly spent £500 on airport transfers. On one occasion, Mattsson and three guests cruised central London in a Bentley Brooklands, calling at bars and nightclubs including Trader Vics, Monte's, and Iceni — a regular haunt. The bill for the car came to £732.

The cars were supplied by Wings of Desire, an upmarket limousine and motorcycle company, which is suing Lord Moyne's company, Guinness Management, for alleged non-payment of fees. A judgment in the sum of £6,451.51 was obtained on December 8 in the Central London County Court in favour of High Travel Limited, trading as Wings of Desire.

The move threatens a further embarrassment to Lord Moyne, the author Jonathan Guinness, who fronted the purchase of a majority stake in Trustor in June. Nearly £50 million in Trustor funds went missing soon afterwards, passing through Lord Moyne's London bank account en route to various offshore destinations. The bulk of the funds were traced to Luxembourg, where they were frozen.

Mr Mattsson and Mr Jisander were arrested in Stockholm in early November. A third man, Joachim Posener, is being sought by police. Lord Moyne says he was taken in by the Swedes, and took immediate steps to protect Trustor shareholders' funds upon realising something was wrong.

Guinness Management accepts liability for two Wings of Desire invoices — including the £1,882 stretch limousine — but denies any further liability. It says other sums were run-up by Mr Mattsson and Mr Jisander without authorisation. It intends to contest the proceedings.

The stretch limousine was hired by Guinness Management on October 11. Mr Mattson and Mr Jisander, accompanied by Lord Moyne and one other, travelled to Compton Beauchamp near Swindon; returning to London five hours later. Guinness Management says the purpose was to visit "someone involved in the Trustor deal".

Inquiries reveal that Compton Beauchamp is the country home of Erik Penser, an anglophile Swedish banker and amateur horse breeder. Mr Penser controls a company called Yggdrasil, which holds 17.4 per cent in Cortecs International, the drug development company.

Guinness Management acknowledges hiring a motorcycle to deliver documents to Biggin Hill airport in Kent on Sunday November 2, shortly before the Swedes were arrested. The documents were handed tc Mattsson, who then caught a flight to Luxembourg.

A day earlier, Mr Jisander was taken to Heathrow to fly to an unknown destination. He handed the driver two gold credit cards with instructions to deliver them to the Lanesborough Hotel. The cards were collected by a personal assistant to Lindsay Smallbone, Lord Moyne's associate at Guinness Management.

BUSINESS TODAY

STOCK MARKET INDICES		
FTSE 100	5203.4	(+81.6)
Yield	3.14%	
FTSE All share	2431.52	(+28.41)
Nikkei	15985.21	(+75.82)
New York:		
Dow Jones	7997.69	(+75.10)
S&P Composite	971.37	(+7.98)
US RATE		
Federal Funds	5½%*	(6%)
Long Bond	102[illegible]*	(102[illegible])
Yield	5.98%*	(5.97%)
LONDON MONEY		
3-mth Interbank	7[illegible]%	(7[illegible]%)
Litle long gilt future (Mar)	121[illegible]	(121[illegible])
STERLING		
New York:		
$	1.6327*	(1.6330)
London:		
$	1.6334	(1.6330)
DM	2.9149	(2.8906)
FFr	9.7622	(9.8606)
SFr	2.3572	(2.3345)
Yen	213.71	(213.57)
£ Index	103.0	(102.4)
DOLLAR		
London:		
DM	1.7815*	(1.7761)
FFr	5.9690*	(5.9475)
SFr	1.4420*	(1.4325)
Yen	130.79*	(130.88)
$ Index	108.9	(108.5)
Tokyo close Yen 130.93		
NORTH SEA OIL		
Brent 15-day (Mar)	$17.60	(n/a)
GOLD		
London close	$285.25	($286.05)

* denotes midday trading price

Danka shares lose 60% of their value

By Paul Durman

SHARES in Danka Business Systems, the Anglo-American photocopier company, lost almost 60 per cent of their value yesterday when it said its profits would fall because of problems integrating its latest and biggest purchase.

Danka, listed in London but run from Florida, saw its market value collapse from almost £1.2 billion to less than £500 million, as its shares dived from 510p to 217½p — their lowest since 1993.

The company blamed the loss of sales momentum it has suffered because of the integration of its original US photocopier business with the Office Imaging operation bought from Eastman Kodak for about £440 million last year.

Martin St Quinton, chief executive of Danka International, the group's European arm, said: "It's our own fault. We've not made the right management decisions, and we have not implemented them fast enough."

Danka expects sales revenue will be about £30 million below expectations in the third and fourth quarters, which will translate into pre-tax profits of about £80 million, against brokers' forecasts of £112 million. Additionally, Danka will make a £12.6 million charge against its third-quarter results to cover redundancy costs and a £6 million supply shortfall under its agreement with Kodak.

Mr St Quinton said the problems meant the company's growth would be about a year behind its original targets. It is forecasting that net earnings for the year ending next March will be between £53.7 million and £55.9 million (23.6p to 24.6p per share) on revenues of around £2 billion.

704Tempus, page 26

FSA condemns Prudential for management failures

By Caroline Merrell

Sir Peter Davis said: "We have had a lot to put right but no one should doubt . . . our determination to ensure that we have the best industry practices"

THE Financial Services Authority (FSA), the new super-regulator, delivered a severe public reprimand to Prudential Corporation, the UK's biggest insurer.

The FSA chose to deliver a damning attack on Prudential as its first regulatory action. However, a quirk in the regulatory system means the Prudential will escape a fine. Others that have committed less serious rule infringements have suffered six-figure fines.

A spokesman for Sir Peter Davis, Prudential's chief executive, said yesterday there was no question of Sir Peter resigning from his position. Sir Peter is also the man entrusted by the Government to run the Welfare to Work scheme.

The FSA said yesterday an inspection of the company in February found it had failed to correct previous serious rule breaches in connection with its direct sales force of 5,000. In June the Prudential took its sales force off the road for retraining — a process that took until the end of September. It refused to say yesterday how many of its sales force remain with the company.

The damning comments from the FSA, which is in the process of subsuming the other regulators, is the latest embarrassment for Prudential, which has also been severely chastised by Helen Liddell, the Economic Secretary to the Treasury, for being slow to deal with compensation claims for 70,000 customers who may have been mis-sold personal pensions. The company has already received a public reprimand from the Securities and Investments Board, a forerunner of the FSA.

As a result of the regulator's inspection in February Prudential launched a complete overhaul of its management structure. Jim Sutcliffe, head of Prudential Assurance in the UK, Kippa Alliston, head of the direct sales force, and David Linnell, head of compliance, departed, and Sir Peter took direct responsibility for the UK operation after Mr Sutcliffe's abrupt exit in September.

Despite the extensive retraining of the sales force, the FSA has insisted that a special compliance unit double checks all new policies sold by the division. The FSA said Prudential's conduct had fallen substantially below the standards expected. It added: "The FSA expects Prudential Assurance to be able to organise its own affairs in compliance with its regulatory obligations so as to ensure that its investors may benefit from the safeguards provided for by the regulatory system."

Sir Peter said: "We have had a lot to put right but no one should doubt the strength of our determination to ensure that we have the best industry practices in terms of selling and compliance.

"The board and I want Prudential to achieve the highest standard of integrity and probity in all of our businesses and we are working to ensure this happens."

John Elbourne, Prudential Assurance's managing director, admitted that the company had also begun to sample some of the thousands of life insurance savings policies that have already been sold by the direct sales force. The regulator is concerned that the sales force had been selling with-profits savings policies to non-taxpayers. These policies have already been subject to tax which cannot be reclaimed by investors; other products may be more suitable. Mr Elbourne said the company would have to offer redress to any customer who had been mis-sold a life insurance savings plan.

Commentary, page 25

PERSISTENT AND SERIOUS BREACHES

- The Financial Services Authority said Prudential Assurance failed to implement adequately the requisite corrective action in respect of several breaches identified by previous monitoring visits. These included severe shortcomings in relation to the training of its direct sales staff and their competence. The FSA said "the gravity, extent and nature" of contraventions identified after a monitoring inspection visit indicate:
- A deep-seated and long-standing failure in management which prevented Prudential Assurance from recognising its own shortcomings;
- A failure satisfactorily to address and remedy defects previously identified;
- A cultural disposition against compliance that filtered through Prudential Assurance's branch offices, their managers and advisers;
- That unsuitable sales have been made;
- A failure to establish and maintain adequate systems, procedures and controls so as to ensure compliance with regulatory obligations. Such failing has necessitated a fundamental restructuring by Prudential Assurance in the areas of compliance and training and competence;
- That Prudential had an organisational structure that allowed the cost of its own compliance arrangements to take precedence over the interests of its investors.
- The FSA said it was satisfied that Prudential Assurance's conduct "has fallen substantially below the standards that the public have a right to expect from a regulated firm."

Bass to return £850m after selling pubs

By Adam Jones

BASS is to return £850 million to shareholders after selling 1,428 pubs to a venture capital team that includes two of the UK's most successful restaurant entrepeneurs.

The market is now waiting for Bass to make a big acquisition, possibly hotels in Europe or the Far East. After returning the £850 million to shareholders through a bonus issue of redeemable preference shares, Bass said it would still be able to spend £1.5 billion or more, assuming that shareholders approve the return in February.

The leased pubs are being bought by a venture headed by Hugh Osmond, the entrepeneur and Pizza Express veteran, Roger Myers, co-founder of the Pelican group, which included Café Rouge and is now owned by Whitbread, and Alan McIntosh, a non-executive director of Topps Tiles, a current stock market high-flyer.

BT Capital Partners Europe, the private equity arm of Bankers Trust, is funding the deal. The three members of the management team are also investing "a significant" but undisclosed amount. The trio are all shareholders of Grovebase, which bought 845 pubs from Nomura earlier this year. Mr McIntosh said there are no plans to merge the two ventures.

The Bass pubs being sold made an operating profit of £67 million before central charges, interest and tax. They are mainly smaller, tenanted houses, serving local communities, although there are about 100 city centre sites.

Richard North, Bass finance director, said: "Profit from these pubs over the last three years has been absolutely flat. They have generated cash but have not grown." Bass will now concentrate on its managed estate. Paul Slattery, a Dresdner Kleinwort Benson analyst, said Bass had received a good price for the pubs. Their new owners aim to expand the amount of food offered. Mr McIntosh said: "There are 400 pubs in this portfolio which don't offer any food at all, not even a sandwich."

Mr McIntosh said they would continue to take Bass beers but not on an exclusive basis. Staff will be asked to come up with a name for the new venture in a competition. He said head office staffing would not be cut.

The deal comes as a blow to Nomura, which had been seen as a frontrunner for the Bass pubs. Bass shares rose 4p to 899p yesterday.

Commentary, page 25

Monsoon

Peter Simon, the founder of the Monsoon retail chain, and his family will be worth around £300 million when the women's clothing and accessories group attempts to join the stock market again at the end of January. Page 24

Celebration

Terry Green, chief executive of Debenhams, is to celebrate the department store chain's independence from the Burton Group with a pay package of £3 million. Page 24

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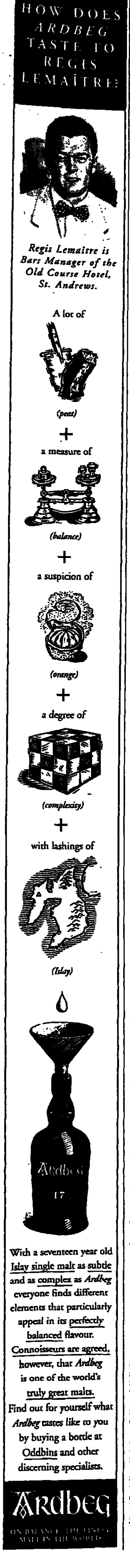

Regis Lemaitre is Bars Manager of the Old Course Hotel, St. Andrews.

A lot of

(peat)

+

a measure of

(balance)

+

a suspicion of

(orange)

+

a degree of

(complexity)

+

with lashings of

(Islay)

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ON BALANCE, THE FINEST MALT IN THE WORLD

Debenhams chief earns £3m as demerger nears

By Fraser Nelson

ALAN WELLER

Terry Green, left, and Matthew Roberts, finance director, can cash in all their share options

TERRY GREEN, chief executive of Debenhams, is to celebrate the department store chain's independence from the Burton Group with a pay package of £3 million, taking the lion's share of a £10 million boardroom bonanza.

Mr Green, who took the helm at Debenhams three years ago, has carved himself a £1.9 million Christmas bonus after cashing share options on top of his £662,000 salary.

The group, which will pay £750,000 in bonuses to its four top directors this year, is also allowing everyone to cash in every share option. This could trigger an extra £240,000.

Joe Hoerner, who will remain chief executive of the Burton Group when it is renamed Arcadia, was paid £816,000 but did not cash in any of his share options — which are now worth £3.6 million.

Each director will be given the chance to cash in every share option — including those which would otherwise remain locked up until 2003. However, the company suggested that many of the directors will transfer the options for use after the demerger.

The company detailed the payouts in its demerger document yesterday which suggested that Debenhams is likely to have a market capitalisation of £1.6 billion. It also published further details of its substantial roll-out plan which, it says, will create 4,000 jobs over the next three years after £300 million of expenditure.

Mr Green was well received in the City yesterday after his first solo presentation as head of Debenhams. Burton Group shares rose 2¼p to 143¼p, valuing the company at £2.1 billion.

Even after the demerger, the two companies will remain strongly linked through the Arcadia concessions which remain trading in Debenhams department stores.

The outlets, ranging from Top Man to Racing Green, generate 10 per cent of Debenhams sales and enjoy a preferential deal in hiring space.

Mr Green said this preferential arrangement will be ended over the next three years, but played down analysts' fears that the Arcadia facias could drag profits by competing with Debenhams' extensive range of own brands. The demerger, which should deliver cost savings of up to £15 million a year, will be put to a shareholders' vote next Monday. If approved, dealings of Debenhams and Burton Group will begin on Boxing Day.

Arcadia, which remains Britain's largest high street fashion retailer, made pre-tax profit of £20 million on sales of £1.4 billion in the year to August 30. Debenhams made £120 million on sales of £1.3 billion in the same period.

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Caspian to site £40m arena at Elland Rd

By Jason Nissé

CASPIAN GROUP, which owns Leeds United, the Premiership football club, is to invest more than £50 million to build a 14,000-seat indoor arena next door to Leeds' ground at Elland Road and to redevelop one of the ground's stands.

The move, which comes in tandem with Caspian changing its name to Leeds Sporting, will bring Leeds City Council in as a shareholder in the group, with the right to appoint a director to the board.

The council is selling Leeds Sporting the freehold of Elland Road as well as most of the land around the stadium which is currently used for car parking, for a total of £11.6 million.

Of this £2.5 million is payable in shares — giving the council a stake of slightly under 3 per cent — and another £1.3 million can be taken in shares. Councillor Alec Hudson, the council's deputy leader, is expected to join Leeds Sporting's board.

The group has agreed to build the indoor arena on the site, which it estimates will cost £40 million. Leeds Sporting's new ice hockey and basketball teams will be based in the arena. Chris Akers, the group's chairman, hopes to attract up to 25 events, such as rock concerts, each year.

Leeds Sporting is also going to redevelop the West Stand of Elland Road to add 5,000 extra seats and 32 new executive boxes. It is also looking for partners to build a 200-room three star hotel and some restaurants and leisure facilities on the site.

Mr Akers said Leeds Sporting would be able to fund the whole redevelopment without going back to its shareholders. The group will finalise the financing in the spring, but it is expected to include either a bond issue or an investment by a third party.

The group also published its results for the 18 months to June 30. It lost £3.27 million before tax. On a pro-forma basis, it lost £6.23 million in the year to June 30, largely because of a £11.8 million loss on football player transfers. The loss per share for the year was 2.27p and there is no dividend. The shares fell ¼p to 22¾p.

Banks accused of being 'obtuse and unhelpful'

By Caroline Merrell

THE National Consumer Council yesterday delivered a savage attack on the UK's banking industry, accusing banks of adopting an insensitive attitude to those who ran into financial difficulty.

The NCC report compared the policies pledged by the banks with the testimony of advice workers who deal with consumers facing financial hardship.

It claimed the banks had infringed their own policies by treating hard-up customers in an unreasonable or intimidating manner. The report emphasised the banks needed to improve if they were to live up to their 1997 revised code of practice.

David Hatch, NCC chairman, said: "Life's upsets and upheavals — divorce, illness, unemployment — hit consumers in the pocket as well as in the face. Even the good things in life, like a new baby or a family wedding, can leave you suddenly strapped for cash.

"It's at these crucial times that customers too often find their banks at their most obtuse and unhelpful. A temporary shortage of cash spirals into a vicious circle of overdrafts, extra charges and bounced cheques.

"But putting people in a position where they may lose their home, or be unable to pay essential bills simply prevents them becoming solvent again. That doesn't help the bank or the customer."

While banks asked customers in financial trouble to contact them early, the report said their attitude was often intimidatory.

Hatch: banks unhelpful

Firms take the knife to canteen subsidies

By Graham Searjeant
Financial Editor

COST-CONSCIOUS employers have cut annual subsidies to works canteens and staff restaurants by an average of £25 per head, a survey claims. But more employees are using them.

Outside caterers have improved service and class distinctions are fading fast, 73 per cent now having only one dining room. This has pushed subsidy costs per customer down by a quarter.

The average subsidy came down from £210 per employee in 1993 to £185 in 1996, but the cost per user fell by nearly £100 a year to £275, mainly through cutting waste, controlling food costs better and improving labour efficiency.

Yet prices have been raised above the rate of inflation. Deloitte & Touche Hospitality and Leisure Consulting, who surveyed 1,000 sites serving 260,000 people jointly with the Industrial Society, found that average prices for a standard basket of items rose 33 per cent over the period, while the relevant price index rose only 10 per cent and actual food costs 12 per cent.

Public spending below forecast of Chancellor

By Alasdair Murray, Economics Correspondent

GORDON BROWN remains on course to undershoot the Government's target for public borrowing with the Treasury maintaining an iron grip on public spending, new data published yesterday showed.

The public sector borrowing requirement (PBSR) for November totalled £2.3 billion, compared with £2.6 billion last year. This leaves the total PSBR for the first eight months of the year standing at £6.6 billion, £11.3 billion lower than last year.

Economists said the Chancellor was in a strong position to improve on the Treasury's PSBR forecast, even though it was only revised down from £10.9 million to £9.5 billion in the pre-Budget report last month.

Adam Cole, UK economist at James Capel, said: "We continue to believe that the downwards revisions that the Chancellor made to his borrowing projections were over-cautious and an undershoot for the full year is still likely."

But David Hillier, UK economist at Barclays Capital, gave warning that Mr Brown could still face a battle holding down public spending in the next few months as it is clear that not all Labour MPs are prepared to accept "sticking to Kenneth Clarke's 'eye-wateringly tight' spending targets."

Central government departmental outlays were 4 per cent lower than last November, ensuring total spending this financial year is 1 per cent below the levels seen last year, compared with a predicted rise of 1.1 per cent.

Economists, however, pointed to signs that tax receipts are also below expected levels, with total receipts only 5.2 per cent ahead from last year compared with a forecast rise of 8.2 per cent.

Income tax receipts fell sharply due to lower corporation tax revenues, which reflect some companies changing the end of their financial year. There was also a negative impact from an alteration to the schedule for paying corporation tax.

Receipts will be boosted next month by the first instalment of the windfall levy, which will add an extra £2.6 billion to the Treasury's coffers.

Monsoon blows towards stock market with new flotation plan

Simon holding worth £300m

By George Sivell

PETER SIMON, the founder of the Monsoon retail chain, and his family will be worth about £300 million when the women's clothing and accessories group attempts to join the stock market again at the end of next month.

Initial City estimates value Monsoon, founded by Mr Simon during 1973 with one shop in London's Beauchamp Place, at between £280 million and £350 million. It was revealed yesterday that the company is 96 per cent owned by two trusts based in Guernsey operated by Credit Suisse Trust as trustee on behalf of Mr Simon and his family.

A previous attempt to float Monsoon was halted after brokers were unable to identify ownership of about two thirds of the shares.

NatWest Markets is sponsor to the float and NatWest Securities is stockbroker. In July 1996 BZW resigned as stockbroker to the flotation over what was believed to be the failure of Monsoon to clarify ownership of two trusts, based in Malta, that owned 67 per cent of the company. It is believed that BZW found underwriting the issue difficult because of the Maltese jurisdiction in which such a large slab of the company was held.

The BZW float is believed to have valued Monsoon at £250 million. It is believed that Mr Simon has been advised to diversify his investments. No new money will be raised for the company during the institutional placing although other senior directors will be invited to participate. The outstanding 4 per cent of the company is already owned by directors and senior management.

Monsoon directors also believe that the listing will help the company to reward its employees via share ownership and share options because it needs to attract and hang on to top quality managers.

The group has grown to a chain of 200 Monsoon and Accessorize outlets around the world. The first Accessorize store opened in Covent Garden in 1984. Profits before tax in the year to end May reached £25.4 million from sales of £108 million. The Monsoon format trades from 103 locations in Britain, and 24 overseas. Accessorize trades from 179 shops in Britain, 103 of which are concessions within Monsoon outlets. Accessorize also operates four shops overseas. Turnover has grown every year since foundation and trading profits have increased in each of the last 12 years.

BUSINESS ROUNDUP

Tradepoint chief's pay set at £250,000

TRADEPOINT, the loss-making investment exchange, said yesterday that it is paying Nic Stuchfield, its new chief executive, £250,000 a year plus a performance-related bonus. Mr Stuchfield was also granted four million share options, exercisable at 40p. Tradepoint shares closed at 60p yesterday, down 3p. One third of the options will be vested in November 1999, another third in November 2000, and the final tranche in November 2001. Mr Stuchfield joined Tradepoint from Barclays Golbal Investors, where he was chief operating officer.

Tradepoint made a loss of £3 million in the six months to Spetember 30. Last year, Gavin Casey, the chief executive of the London Stock Exchange, received £249,000 plus £41,000 in pension contributions for just under eight months' work after his appointment.

BT to clarify price list

BT will have to draw up a clear and comprehensive price list for its services after an intervention by Don Cruickshank, the Director-General of Telecommunications. Mr Cruickshank has issued a notice to BT saying he proposes to take action over the company's failure to publish an accurate and comprehensive list. Oftel found during an investigation that a number of prices were missing from its list and has subsequently found further examples of unclear or ambiguous entries.

Wickes sales ahead

WICKES, the DIY retailer that almost collapsed last year when it discovered a £50 million black hole in its accounts, yesterday issued an upbeat trading statement saying that like-for-like sales had risen 10.2 per cent in the 48 weeks to November 29. Shares in the company, which is still the subject of a Serious Fraud Office investigation, rose 4½p to 254p, having plunged from a high of 858½p last year. Analysts now expect the company to report year-end pre-tax profits of £8.5 million in February, compared with previous forecasts of £6 million.

Peter Black expands

PETER BLACK HOLDINGS, the healthcare company, is acquiring Ferroscan (UK), a fellow supplier of vitamins, minerals and supplements, from Denmark's Ferroscan A/S for around £35 million. Ferroscan is expected to report pre-tax profits of £3 million on turnover of around £22 million in the current financial year. Peter Black is raising £18.5 million via a vendor placing of new shares at 370p. Existing shares rose 7p to 388½p yesterday. Peter Black said the acquisition would enhance earnings next year.

United Industries bid

UNITED INDUSTRIES has made an agreed £13.8 million bid for Neepsend, the engineering group, which values it at 55p a share. Shares in Neepsend rose 10½p to 52½p in response even though it declared that it was in bid talks on November 26. Kenneth Coates, United chairman, said: "The acquisition is in line with our strategy to develop the company both organically and by acquisition." The offer entitles Neepsend shareholders to retain the net interim dividend of 0.6p a Neepsend share, payable on January 28.

Care UK advances

CARE UK, the specialist care outsourcing company, lifted profits to £4.42 million from £3.52 million before tax and exceptional items in the year to September 30. In addition, the company raised £8.72 million from the Haven Management subsidiary and Care UK Investments. Adjusted earnings rose to 8.6p a share from 6.79p. The total dividend is increased to 1.25p a share from 1p with a 0.85p final. The shares rose 5½p to 144p yesterday. The company has long-term tenders with City of Westminster social services and West Hertfordshire health authority.

Warning hits Alumasc

SHARES of Alumasc fell 63½p to 242½p after the engineering and construction products group gave warning that interim pre-tax profits would fall short of last year's comparable figure of £6.5 million. Although the second half would show an improvement over the first-half results for the full year, after charging restructuring costs, profits would be below last year's £14.8 million. A restructuring charge of £1 million will be incurred this year and next. Alumasc said trading had been hit by variable demand and higher margin pressure for many products.

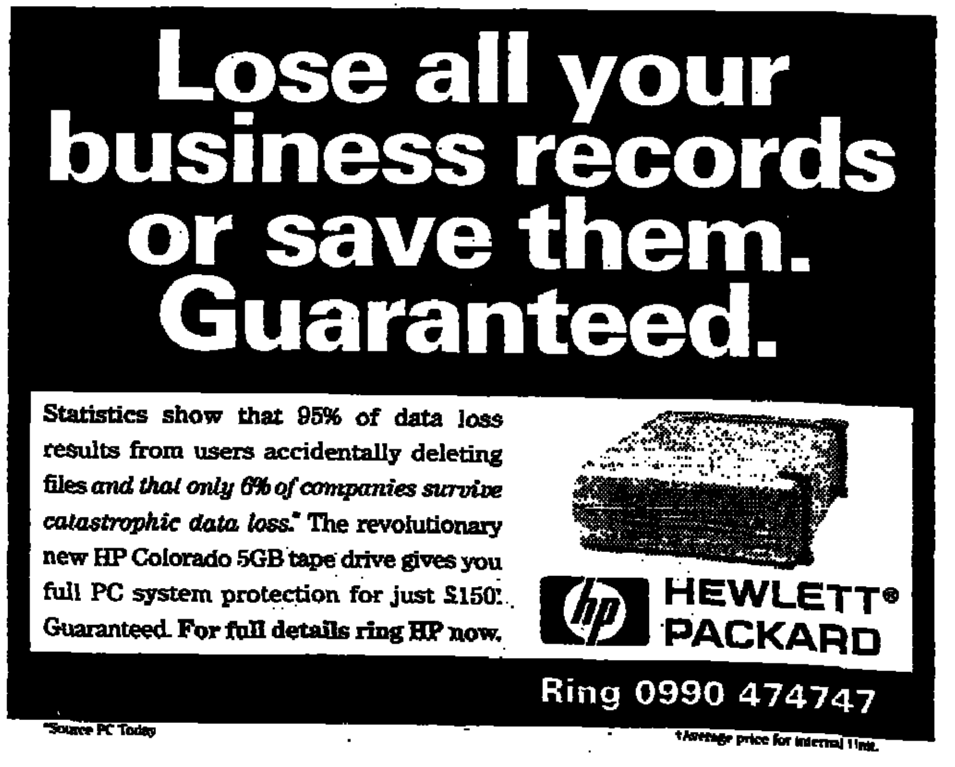
Minmet extends search

A WIDER exploration of a potential gold find in Devon is to begin in January 1998. Minmet, the Irish company sitting on the potential find near Crediton, yesterday revealed details of a cash raising to finance the further exploration. Minmet is putting a further £200,000 into Crediton Minerals via a 17p a share subscription for 1.176 million new shares. Shares in Minmet were unchanged at 5p yesterday. After yesterday's announcement Minmet will increase its shareholding in Crediton from 75.58 per cent to 78.73 per cent.

TOURIST RATES

	Bank Buys	Bank Sells		Bank Buys	Bank Sells
Australia $	2.61	2.43	Malta	0.675	0.616
Austria Sch	21.47	19.81	Netherlds Gld	3.471	3.176
Belgium Fr	63.21	58.25	New Zealand $	2.97	2.73
Canada $	2.448	2.260	Norway Kr	12.54	11.60
Cyprus Cyp£	0.899	0.827	Portugal Esc	309.53	287.50
Denmark Kr	11.68	10.79	S Africa Rd	8.68	7.72
Finland Mkk	9.33	8.58	Spain Pta	257.79	239.00
France Fr	10.21	9.43	Sweden Kr	13.52	12.42
Germany Dm	3.07	2.83	Switzerland Fr	2.51	2.29
Greece Dr	485	446	Turkey Lira	335273	315395
Hong Kong $	13.49	12.29	USA $	1.740	1.597
Iceland	129	109			
Ireland Pt	1.18	1.09			
Israel Shk	6.17	5.52			
Italy Lira	3027	2790			
Japan Yen	228.43	210.90			

Rates for small denomination bank notes supplied by Barclays Bank. Different rates apply to traveller's cheques. Rates as at close of trading yesterday.



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The man from the imprudential

COMMENTARY

by our City Editor

Sir Peter Davis is one of the country's leading industrialists. After starting out at J Sainsbury, he moved on to be chief executive of Reed International, restructuring the publishing group and guiding it to a successful merger with Elsevier of The Netherlands. After falling out with the Dutch, he took a multi-million pay off and was parachuted into Prudential Corporation, where he was seen as just the man to bring stability after the ousting of Mick Newmarch. He was knighted in the last administration, but was well enough thought of by Chancellor Gordon Brown to be invited to head the Welfare-to-Work initiative. Nonetheless, if Sir Peter is not careful, this glorious career is about to come to an ignominious end.

Was it arrogance, bad advice or sheer bravado that led Sir Peter to put himself at the centre of the his company's "The Man from the Pru" advertising campaign? It does not matter. Sir Peter appears on our TV screens saying "you can trust me". But the new Financial Services Authority says the Pru has "a deep-seated and long-standing failure in management", "a cultural disposition against compliance" and "allowed the cost of its own compliance to take precedence over the interest of its own investors". It mis-sold pensions and it mis-sold life assurance. It used a reputation created over decades of honourable behaviour to rip off customers. And it is not alone. According to Direct Line — which admittedly might have a vested interest in playing up these problems — in the last seven years, life companies have pocketed £500 million of tax brakes intended for people who took up personal pension plans thanks to high up-front charges and poor redemption values. According to the Office of Fair Trading, financial services company selling to the elderly routinely rip them off. And when Helen Liddell, the Economic Secretary, took to naming and shaming the firms that mis-sold pensions and were tardy in paying compensation, the list stretched to cover the lion's share of the industry.

Does this excuse Sir Peter? No. Though he came to the Pru from outside, he was a non-executive director for many years. Yesterday he said he did not realise the extent of the problems until he had been chief executive for 18 months, and then it took him another year to realise that the only way to solve the problem was to get rid of Jim Sutcliffe, who ran the Pru in the UK, and take charge himself. In other words, it took one of the UK's best paid and most repected business leaders more than 26 months to realise there was something rotten at the heart of the company he ran and do something about it.

The position is not totally black. The FSA says the Pru has shown improvements. Will this be enough? Sir Peter has taken a high profile on this matter and effectively named and shamed himself. His credibility and that of the Pru is fragile. Drastic action is needed to redeem the situation.

Calling time on a brewer's diversion

Whatever else can be said about Bass, it certainly knows how to sell things. The likes of Matthew Clark and Merrydown can testify to the brewers ability to market its odious alcopop, Hooch. Carlsberg-Tetley is feeling the cold blast from brands such as Carling Black Label, Caffrey's and Worthington. And in successive days, Bass has persuaded two buy-in teams — one backed by PPM Ventures, the other by Bankers Trust — to take tired, low growth assets off Bass's hands for fancy prices.

Yesterday's deal is, if anything, even better than Monday's sale of the Gala bingo operation. Gala may not have any growth in it, but it is the sort of thing management buy-ins are made of, throwing off cash to fund interest payments on the debt in the deal while the managers hope to squeeze the sort of margins that big companies often fail to find. Sir Ian Prosser was glad to be rid of it and must have been laughing all the way to the bank when the cheque for £279 million was delivered.

The pubs deal was even better. Bass managed to persuade a team including Hugh Osmond of Pizza Express and Roger Miles of Café Rouge to enter into a bidding war with Nomura, which in the past has been able to pay more for pubs than anyone else through the simple expedient of needing a much lower return on capital than most other organisations. Bass therefore receives £573 million for a low growth business it does not want ahead of what many feel will be a plateau in the leisure sector as the economy slows. Bass still has one remaining low growth and unloved business — Coral racing. If all goes to form, this should be heading out the stable door in the not too far distant future at a fancy price.

However, all these sales create their own problem — what to do with the money? Bass is giving £850 million back to shareholders but it still has about £1.5 billion burning a hole in its pocket. What will it spend it on? Greenalls? Vaux? International hotels? How about not spending this money. Instead of growing, maybe Bass should shrink.

Pubs and hotels often go well together, but brewing and hotels rarely do. Holiday Inns has never been a terribly good business for Bass and it detracts from the business which Bass is good at — drinks. So on Sir Ian. Demerge hotels so it can either thrive or be bought by someone dedicated to the hotels business. Give the spare cash to shareholders and concentrate on brewing.

No money is dirty if you are broke

Governments would sweep the illegal "black economy" under the carpet were it not under the carpet already. It is a living insult to the state, which has failed to reach millions of people who work and trade without paying the same taxes as everyone else.

In Western countries, these bands of outlaws compound their felony by claiming social security benefits to which they are not entitled. In all countries they tend to corrupt.

They corrupt workers who are forced by employers to operate outside the system and can be blackmailed into further crimes. They corrupt consumers, who become willing accessories to save VAT on home repairs. They corrupt honest employers who have to cut corners to compete. They corrupt officials and they corrupt Swiss banks.

No wonder the IMF purred when South Korea brought in laws to force people to use their own names in all financial transactions. No cost-saving nominees for them.

In times of need, however, the black economy can come in jolly handy. Pragmatists in Italy want to add as much of the unmeasurable as they dare to their measured national income to pass Maastricht tests on debt ratios.

Korea is in greater need. So it plans to waive the law and issue $2 billion in "false name" bonds that you can buy, own or sell in any name you please as long as you lend the Government your ill-gotten cash. You can, it seems, rely on the criminal classes much more than on the IMF.

European union

COMMERCIAL UNION is never likely to be the same again when Pehr Gyllenhammar, once boss of Skandia Life and Volvo, takes the chair. CU was long the most Europe-minded of composites, until BAT met Zurich. Sweden's top francophile is something else. His plan to merge Volvo into Renault was too much for other Swedes, but so much of UK finance has fallen into foreign hands that few would notice another proud domino fall.

Upbeat Toad cuts loss

Toad, the car security company which has the backing of Noel Edmonds, the TV personality, yesterday said it had more than halved pre-tax losses from £2.5 million to £1.1 million in the six months to September 30.

Although turnover rose only 6 per cent from £2.7 million to £2.8 million, Kevin Gray, the company's chief executive, said he would be disappointed if turnover did not hugely increase within two years.

The positive outlook will perhaps come too late for many investors who have seen the value of their shares collapse from 117½p to 20p since last year. They rose 1½p to 21½p after yesterday's results. However, the reputation of Chris Evans, the biotechnology entrepreneur and star of the City who helped to create Toad, relies on its long-term success.

Toad's losses per share fell from 14.3p to 4.15p, and again no dividend will be paid. The company is expected to move into profit next year.

Homebuying 'slows down'

New figures from Barclays have confirmed the slowdown in growth in the housing market. According to the bank's Mortgage Index, which is based on the flow of funds through solicitors' deposit accounts, lending dropped 4 per cent last month to £6.7 billion, the third fall in four months. This is 1 per cent down on the level last November.

Successive rises in interest rates have dented homeowners' belief in rising house prices. Fifty-one per cent of people surveyed by the bank thought their homes would be worth more in 12 months' time, down 6 per cent. At the same time competition amongst homebuyers has waned slightly. For every ten properties on the market there are now 21 people wanting to buy a home, compared with 23 three months ago.

Kenwood fall

Kenwood, the electrical appliances manufacturer, yesterday claimed that the strength of sterling had wiped almost £2 million off profits and nearly £10 million off sales. The company saw pre-tax profits for the six months to October 3 dip from £3.3 million to £2.2 million, while sales fell from £98 million to £81 million. The shares fell 6½p to 111½p. Earnings per share fell to 3.6p (4.9p). There is no dividend (3.25p).

RJR jobs to go

RJR Nabisco Holdings, the US food and tobacco company, is to cut 2,800 jobs worldwide. RJR, which owns brands such as Camel, said it would be taking a fourth-quarter $390 million (£233 million) charge to cover the job losses and writedown in assets. The job losses will be mainly in the tobacco division.

PETER TRIEVNOR

Alan Rothwell, left, and Lord Daresbury believe that Greenalls is punching its weight in investment terms without throwing money at the business

Greenalls to pour in £200m investment as profits rise 6%

By Chris Ayres

GREENALLS, the pubs and leisure group still recovering from a shock profits warning in September, yesterday admitted that it had suffered a difficult year and refused to say whether or not it was in takeover talks.

There was some room for Christmas cheer, however, as the group reported a 6 per cent rise in pre-tax profit for the year to September 26 from £149 million to £157 million. Shares in the company rose 14p to 422½p, a significant recovery from its 315p low in November, but still a long way from its high of 633p last year.

Alan Rothwell, finance director, said: "We recognise that 1996-97 was a disappointing year, but the best way to get over this is to perform well."

The company's share price was hit when Lord Daresbury, chief executive, said that expenditure had slowed down at a time when the company's rivals were pumping enormous amounts of cash into retail pub concepts.

"Any operator who says they haven't got a problem with the doubling of capital expenditure nationally cannot be serious," Mr Rothwell added yesterday. "But we feel we're now punching our weight in expenditure, although we're not throwing money at the business."

Speculation has surrounded Greenalls since September that rivals such as Whitbread and Bass are preparing takeover bids. The company, which owns such brands as Henry's Café Bars, Henry's Table and Miller's Kitchen, still refuses to comment. As expected by analysts, Greenalls said planned expenditure for the year ahead would be more than £200 million. It also announced a restructuring of its pub and pub restaurant businesses, including the transfer of 324 pubs from its managed estate to its franchised and tenanted operations.

Total turnover was almost unchanged at £1.1 billion, with earnings per share rising 3.6 per cent from 40.28p to 41.72p. Like-for-like sales rose about 1 per cent, in line with the sector. A final dividend of 10p is due on February 27, making a total of 16.71p (15.4p).

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ALLIED DOMECQ, the drinks and retailing group with such brands as Ballantine's Scotch and Big Steak Pubs, yesterday said it had signed a deal to introduce a wider range of beers to its 3,700 outlets (Chris Ayres writes).

The move — which represents a major change in its beer supply arrangements — includes a deal with Scottish Courage, one of the UK's biggest brewers, which will see Foster's lager distributed to about 700 of Allied's managed and tenanted pubs.

Allied's decision to widen its range of beers comes after a shake-up at Carlsberg-Tetley, which used to be jointly owned by Allied and Carlsberg, the Danish brewer. In June Margaret Beckett, President of the Board of Trade, blocked the sale of Carlsberg-Tetley to Bass. The company's main shareholder is now Carlsberg.

First Choice takes off in spite of costly errors

By Marianne Curphey

FIRST CHOICE Holidays exceeded analysts' expectations to report an increase in full-year pre-tax profit of £5.4 million to £15.4 million after exceptional items. The shares rose 2p to 93p.

The exceptional items included a £8.6 million charge which the company had already announced at the half year in June after discovering accounting errors.

This charge was countered with a £2 million exceptional gain in the year to October 31.

Before exceptionals, pre-tax profit on continuing operations was £22 million (£9.3 million) and the company attributed the strong performance in part to a 39 per cent increase in summer profits to £46.3 million. It said bookings to date were ahead of last year in both its UK and Canadian businesses.

Ian Clubb, chairman, said: "We are also encouraged by the record start to the sale of our summer 1998 programme in the UK and Ireland."

In the year to October 31 First Choice sold 1.6 million summer holidays, 600,000 winter holidays from the UK, one million holidays to customers in Canada and 150,000 in Ireland.

Mr Clubb said the board had decided to hold the dividend at 1.9p, making the full year dividend the same as for 1996 at 2.8p. At present it is the equivalent of just under two times covered and the group is aiming to achieve three times cover before raising it.

Basic earnings per share improved to 3.7p (2.1p). After adjusting for exceptional items, earnings per ordinary share were 5.4p (1.9p).

First Choice strengthened its board by appointing Lance Moir as director of planning and business development and David Howell group as finance director. Mr Clubb said the industry was waiting for the results of the ruling on the Monopolies and Mergers Commission inquiry into tour operating.

A ruling by the Department of Trade and Industry is not expected until the end of January 1998.

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CU chief to consider all options

By Marianne Curphey
Insurance Correspondent

THE chairman designate of Commercial Union, Pehr Gyllenhammar, said his first priority would be to assess whether the insurer needed to consider a merger in the fast-changing world of financial services.

CU has been the subject of intense merger speculation ever since it emerged that it had held talks with BAT Industries about a possible joint venture before BAT announced a link-up with Zurich Life.

"What was a big business few months ago is now a lot smaller and one of the first things I shall need to do when I take up the chairmanship is to discuss with the board how we are positioned in the market," he said.

Mr Gyllenhammar declined to be drawn on specific plans, saying that having joined CU's board in September he was still "very much the new boy". He becomes chairman in April.

Securicor shares drop after sharp profits fall

By Raymond Snoddy
Media Editor

SHARES in Securicor, the security, distribution and telecommunications group, dropped by 13p to 294p in a rising market yesterday after the company disclosed a sharp drop in pre-tax profit.

They plummeted from £107.4 million for the year to September 30 last time to £31.4 million, mainly because of exceptional items and discontinued operations of £70 million, mainly from the communications division.

Even before these were taken into account, Securicor's pre-tax profits fell from £112.7 million in 1996 to £101.4 million this year.

More than £44 million came from losses on closure of the separate service provider for Cellnet, its mobile phone joint venture with BT. Consumer and small business subscribers were sold to Cellnet and corporate customers to Martin Dawes. A further £20.8 million came from Securicor's share of an abandoned computer billing system. City analysts are now looking for pre-tax profits of between £110 million to £120 million for the current financial year.

Wiggs: exceptional losses

Sir Neil Macfarlane, Securicor chairman, said yesterday that "We have made a good start to the current period".

The company, whose chief executive is Roger Wiggs, showed 27 per cent profit in its security and distribution businesses to £48 million. Profits from Securicor's 40 per cent stake in Cellnet rose from £76.6 million to £79 million. Intek, the wireless communications company in the US, lost £13 million.

Securicor said yesterday it had no knowledge of reports that the Department of Trade and Industry planned to change the rules, enabling BT to buy its 40 per cent Cellnet stake. Christopher Shirtliffe, finance director, said Securicor would be prepared to sell at the right price if the rules allowed.

Securicor is increasing its final dividend by 12.1 per cent to 1.35p, making 1.74p for the full year, an increase of 11.7 per cent.

National must sell Citylink

By Our Industrial Staff

MARGARET BECKETT, the President of the Board of Trade, has ruled that the National Express Group, which acquired the ScotRail franchise earlier this year, must sell Scottish Citylink, its subsidiary.

The decision follows a ruling by the Monopolies and Mergers Commission of a conflict of interest between some of the coach services operated by National Express and ScotRail.

The report concluded that nine routes operated by Citylink overlapped with ScotRail train services and could possibly lead to an increase in fares.

National Express said yesterday that it was disappointed with the outcome, but added that they had been expecting the decision "for some time".

Electra may buy back shares to cut discount

By Gavin Lumsden

THE prospect of a share buyback has been raised by Electra Investment Trust, the second largest venture capital investment trust after 3i, in an attempt to reduce the trust's sharp discount.

Despite final results that showed the trust achieved total returns of 24.7 per cent in the 12 months to September 30, Electra's share price of 525p still represents an 18.5 per cent discount to its net asset value of 640p.

Michael Stoddart, chairman of the £1.1 billion trust, said investing in private equity was increasingly competitive and required ever larger sums of money.

"At the moment we need all our resources to compete in the big auctions," he said. "If in the next year or two we don't win any transactions, then we might consider returning surplus capital to shareholders." In addition, the trust was seeking to attract new institutional and private investors to widen its shareholder base, Mr Stoddart said.

Stoddart: competition

The statement came as shareholders in Edinburgh Dragon, a £300 million investment trust, voted overwhelmingly for share buyback proposals that could reduce the Far East fund to below £200 million in an effort to put its discount below 12 per cent.

The buoyant stock market and a boom in mergers and acquisitions saw Electra achieve a record level of realisations. Total sales of unquoted investments rose 30 per cent to £246 million. The biggest was the £92 million sale of Eversholt Leasing, the train leasing company formerly part of British Rail, to HSBC Banking Group, which netted Electra £58.1 million. Electra has realised another £90 million since October.

At the same time Electra invested £217 million in 32 new unquoted companies.

Electra issued a warning that it was unlikely to maintain this level of investment in the UK but was increasing its focus in the US, Latin American and Far East. A final dividend of 5.2p brings the total for the year to 9.7p, up 15 per cent on last year.

STOCK MARKET

FRASER NELSON

Abbey National shares soar on takeover talk

TAKEOVER rumour swept London's financial stocks yesterday as reports of an imminent bid for **Abbey National** triggered a rally that took the sector bursting through the high set before October's market crash.

Abbey National shares enjoyed their sharpest one-day rise, gaining 90p to a high of £11.47 on word that the formal takeover bid that has been expected for the past six months could be on the table after Christmas.

Any bank or insurance house not dogged by connection to the turmoil in Asian markets found itself sharply higher on the day.

HSBC Holdings, 7p softer at £15.78, is this month's hot favourite to bag Abbey National. Its shares had plunged to £15.55 in early trading after an 89-point fall in Hong Kong's Hang Seng index, along with **Standard Chartered**, 9p cheaper at 689p.

The **Prudential Corporation** is now seen to be second in the running for Abbey National. It closed 26p stronger at a new high of 749p with no Asian fears to hold the price back.

Hopes of a merger between **NatWest Bank**, up 46p at £10.45, and **Barclays**, up 35p at £17.50, resurfaced again, taking shares in both companies to new highs.

As Abbey soared ahead, City matchmakers began to speculate that **Royal Bank of Scotland**, 4p firmer at 762p, could plan a get-together with Scottish Widows.

Their rise helped the FTSE 100 to rise 81.6 points to 5203.4 — a level not seen since the September bull run.

City analysts were stunned by the advances, which many put down to the market going "mad" — and blind hope that the merger between UBS and SBC Warburg will trigger consolidation in London.

One analyst said: "These highs are just crazy. It's completely unsustainable — it seems the junior dealers have been left to get excited while the older ones go skiing."

The drug sector joined the financials' rally, as Lehman Brothers issued a bullish note about the sector in general and **SmithKlein Beecham**, up 23p at 651p, in particular.

The positive sentiment helped **Zeneca** to firm 45p to £20.28, still 10 per cent off its summer high. **Glaxo Wellcome** joined in, up 27p at £14.49, while **Galen Holdings** gained 6½p to a new high of 320p.

Tomorrow's interim results from **Asda**, off 1p at 174p, are now expected to spell more bad news than good for rival **Safeway**, which became the worst blue-chip performer after dropping 7½p to 337p. Takeover rumours had been helping Safeway shares up from their profits-warning floor of 319p, on rumours that Asda was fishing in the debt market. Such hopes have now been all but disregarded, as the City returns to its view that Asda's gain is Safeway's loss.

Eidos, the software company that owns Tomb Raider II, delivered a sharp shock to the market when Geoffrey Brown, an executive director, sold £4.2 million of shares at 700p a share.

Coming only months after the Stock Exchange launched an inquiry into share dealings in Eidos and after Coopers & Lybrand quit as the company's auditors, the sell hit already twitchy nerves and the shares tumbled from 740p to 707½p.

Thomas Jourdan, steady at 49½p, is beginning to attract City attention. Dealers have been taking orders from Dublin in recent months, fuelling speculation that David Abell, who recently usurped its former management after an institutional revolt, has put together a takeover deal. Market-makers also said the company's generous allocation of share options to top managers suggests a takeover bid is due.

Nycomed Amersham topped the list of 250 advancers for the last time, gaining 125p to £22.70 on the eve of the healthcare company's promotion to the FTSE 100. It fills the gap created by the merger of **Guinness**, up 6p to 591½p and **Grand Metropolitan**, up 8p to 593p, which become **Diageo** this morning.

First Choice Holiday, where Peter Long is managing director and Ian Chubb is chairman, hardened 2p to 93p after the holiday operator returned a 137 per cent lift in pre-tax profits, to £22 million.

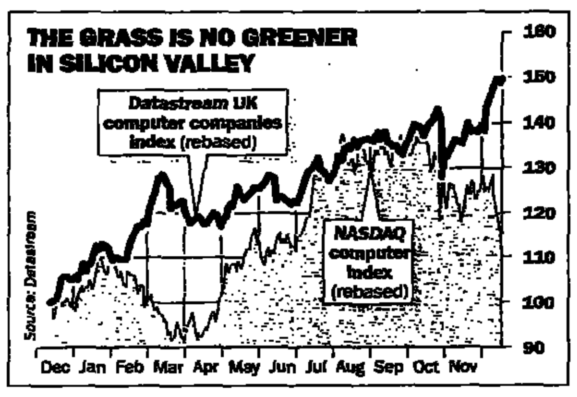
Reduced losses at **Toad** moved the car security group's shares up 1½p to 21½p. The company remains egg on the face of Dr Chris Evans, the biotech entrepreneur who has made millions for investors of **Chiroscience**, up 1p at 243½p and **Celsis International**, off 3p at 86p.

On AIM **Majestic Wine** firmed 9p to 385p on seasonal cheer. Market-makers were caught short of the stock last year and are shoring up ahead of Christmas.

☐ *GILT-EDGED:* The PSBR data made little impact in the futures pit, as dealers held fire for today's retail sales data in the hope that a slowdown on the high street will relieve pressure for further interest rate rises. Treasury 7 per cent 2002 gained 1/32 to £101 27/32, while index-linked Treasury 2½ per cent 2020 dropped 5/32 to £172⅜.

☐ **NEW YORK:** Further gains in the technology sector helped the broader market and by midday the Dow Jones industrial average was 75.10 points ahead at 7,997.69.

Peter Long and Ian Clubb, of First Choice Holidays, 2p ***better after 137 per cent increased profits to £22 million***



London's high-tech stocks have often cast a wistful eye at the sky-high ratings being given to any computer stock that lists in New York's Nasdaq exchange. Ratings of 40 to 50 times earnings have eluded most of the UK crop, which remain officially categorised as "support services".

The Stock Exchange has now agreed to create a new FTSE sector for IT stocks, comprising shares of 62 computer companies. The idea is that analysts will take a closer look at the higher-growth companies, see the hidden beauty, and send their shares heavenwards.

Almost certainly, the likes of Sema and Misys will be in more demand — but not because they are understood any better.

If a new sector is created, Tracker Funds will buy shares in the sector to ensure that they remain covered — but they will restrict themselves to the three largest members.

As the rest have outpeformed Nasdaq in the past 12 months anyway, the new categorisation is unlikely to work too many wonders.

MAJOR INDICES

New York (midday):

Dow Jones	7997.69 (+75.10)
S&P Composite	971.37 (+7.98)

Tokyo:

Nikkei Average	15085.21 (+75.82)

Hong Kong:

Hang Seng	10346.38 (-88.77)

Amsterdam:

AEX Index	904.73 (+15.95)

Sydney:

AO	2514.1 (+13.2)

Frankfurt:

DAX	4083.97 (+23.93)

Singapore:

Straits	1561.75 (-38.89)

Brussels:

General	14205.04 (+216.17)

Paris:

CAC-40	2912.18 (+73.91)

Zurich:

SKA Gen	1237.0 (+12.3)

London:

FT 30	3313.0 (+40.8)
FTSE 100	5203.4 (+81.6)
FTSE 250	4757.0 (-6.0)
FTSE 350	2493.1 (+31.1)
FTSE Eurotrack 100	2641.91 (+14.01)
FTSE All-Share	2431.52 (+28.41)
FTSE Non Financials	2434.16 (+22.75)
FTSE Fixed Interest	134.23 (-0.23)
FTSE Govt Secs	101.27 (-0.24)
Bargains	54534
SEAQ Volume	865.7m
US$	1.6335 (+0.0006)
German Mark	2.9151 (+0.0247)
Exchange Index	103.0 (+0.6)
Bank of England official close (4pm)	
£:ECU	1.4743
£:SDR	1.2140
RPI	159.6 Nov (3.7%) Jan 1987=100
RPIX	158.0 Nov (2.8%) Jan 1987=100

RECENT ISSUES

Autologic	267½	+ 3
BG 'B'	30½	...
Boustead	20½	...
Bovis Homes	193	...
Capital Opps Trust	113½	...
Comland Comm	55	- 2½
Cresco International	153½	...
Energis (290)	270	...
Flmg Geared Units	#179	+ 2
Foresight Tech Wts	25	...
Foresight Technology	85	...
General Inds	35½	...
Gooch & Housego	131½	+ 5
Manchester & Lon	270	...
Marchpole	122½	...
Market Link Publ	55	...
Metalsrussia	74½	...
Northern Rcrtmnt	138½	+ 1
Nottingham Forest	53½	- ½
Property Asset	7	...
Range Cooker	6½	...
Rapid Technology	92½	...
Razorback Vehicles	102½	...
SCS Upholstery	111½	...
Saatchi & Saatchi	111½	+ 1½
Savoy Asset Mngmt	113½	...
Seascope Shipping	250	...
Second Scot Zr Dv Pf	100	...
Second Scottish Natl	102½	+ 2¼
Symer	232½	...
Tetra	175½	...
Vanguard Med Wts	45	+ 3

RIGHTS ISSUES

FI Group n/p (640)	195	...
Taylor Nel n/p (60)	18¼	- 1¼

MAJOR CHANGES

RISES:

LASMO	285p (+20p)
Wickes	254p (+14½p)
Bank Scotland	584p (+27p)
Alliance & Leic	831p (+37½p)
Royalblue	257½p (+10p)
Kingfisher	852p (+32p)

FALLS:

Kelsey Ind	385p (-20p)
Securicor	294p (-13p)
Ramsdens	330p (-10p)
United News	710p (-15p)

Closing Prices Page 29

TEMPUS

Bottom of the barrel

FOR a company beset by bid rumours — Bass and Whitbread are said to be prowling — Greenalls boasts a remarkably weak share price. After yesterday's rally, the company is valued on just ten times forecast earnings but predators will think twice about bidding £1.5 billion for this motley collection of brands.

Greenalls was once itself a Footsie stock but its fall from grace has been rapid. Having paid over the odds for the Boddington's pub group, the company neglected to invest and the results were on full display yesterday. Cash in the pub and restaurant tills grew by just 1 per cent in the last financial year. Stripping out inflation, the Greenalls business has therefore shrunk during a period of booming leisure and restaurant spend. Of course, Greenalls has a solution. It has dumped the tired pubs into a box called franchising and will invest £100 million in the rest but the money is to be spread, scattergun, over no less than eight brands, including one new format.

Yesterday, Bass shed 1,000 tenanted pubs which begs the question why it would take on Greenalls' franchised estate. Of course, both Whitbread and Bass could slot Miller's Kitchen and Henry's into their own themed operations, Brewer's Fayre and Harvester. But what is the point of paying a premium for someone else's brand, only to dump the old signage into a skip?

Greenalls' investors might as well hang on in the hope that a silly bid emerges but in the meantime they could take the initiative. The chief executive, Lord Daresbury, has little to recommend him other than the family name Greenall. By sending him to new pastures, he might be spared from doing a Rocco.

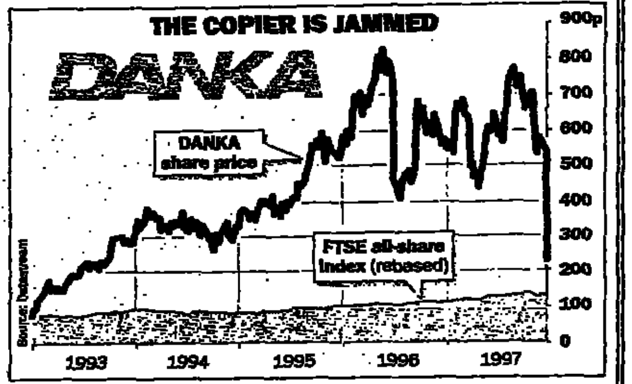
Danka

ON THE face of it, the near 60 per cent collapse in the share price of Danka Business Systems yesterday looks a harsh judgment on its earnings disappointment. The photocopier company, a strange Anglo-American hybrid, cautioned that this year's underlying pre-tax profits will undershoot forecasts by less than 30 per cent.

However, this latest setback raises fundamental questions about the quality of Danka's management. No slouch at buying companies, as their enormous growth amply demonstrates, there are doubts about whether it is up to running them. It seems that, whenever Danka stands still, the tedious business of running the shop gets the better of it. That was certainly the case 18 months ago when Danka issued a profits warning because it took on too many new sales staff too quickly.

The latest setback sounds horribly familiar. Big mergers have a tendency to unnerve the troops and when Danka set out to knit its original business with the Kodak operations acquired last year, they should have expected trouble. After all, a service business is about managing people, not just staring at spreadsheets.

Danka has been admirably frank about its management shortcomings. But the company still faces a long haul to repair its credibility. This latest episode certainly will not help the company to win any new fans on this side of the Atlantic.



Arcadia

THIS has been no vintage year for demergers. Thorn EMI shareholders lost billions and Hanson's former followers are out of pocket. Any holder of Burton Group shares could be forgiven for feeling a touch nervous.

Although the industrial logic behind demergers is still far from proven, the City has long been unable to mentally disassociate Burton shares from Burton suits and priced its shares accordingly. Shed of the Burton tag, Debenhams is no longer guilty by association and should be valued on a par with its department store peers. It has targeted the middle market with a core of well-focused own brands and, set down a path for growth, plans to increase floorspace by 20 per cent.

The only snag is the hangover of Arcadia stores, still 10 per cent of sales, where the likes of Top Man and Hawkshead often compete with the more profitable house brands. Terry Green, chief executive, is a newcomer to the City and will have to prove his worth before the shares can take off.

But a conservative sector average rating for Debenhams gives a value of £1.6 billion, leaving Arcadia priced at only £500 million. For a company with sales of £1 billion, that looks too cheap and undercuts even Storehouse — which guards the bottom of the sector with a lowly p/e ratio of 11.3.

Unless Christmas sales prove a complete disaster, Burton shares should jump when they do the splits. In the mean time, they must be a buy.

First Choice

FIRST CHOICE'S admission that it lost a little of its market share over the summer peak season should be good news for investors. For too long the industry has chased growth in sales at the expense of margins. The cycle of binge and purge led to a regular end-of-season fire sale of millions of spare holidays at less than half price.

All the tour operators, including Thomson and Airtours, have learnt their lesson and have refrained from piling on capacity when bookings looked strong.

Despite the good progress which Peter Long, the new chief executive, has made since his appointment, there is still much work to be done. Although this year it has been unencumbered by the huge marketing expense of rebranding which took place under former chief executive Francis Barron, its spread of business is narrow compared to Airtours, which has subsidiaries across Scandinavia as well as Canada. Airtours remains a star performer among FTSE 100 stocks, and is still the better stock to hold if you want exposure to this volatile sector.

EDITED BY CARL MORTISHED

COMMODITIES

LIFFE

COCOA

Dec	1107 SLR	Mar	1210-1209
Mar	1119-1118	May	1231 SLR
May	1138-1136	Jul	1250 SLR
Jul	1159-1157	Sep	1259 SLR
Sep	1171-1170		
Dec	1190 SLR		Volume: 6843

ROBUSTA COFFEE ($)

Jan	1730 SLR	Sep	unq
Mar	1715-1705	Nov	–
May	1705 SLR	Jan	–
Jul	1690 BID		Volume: 5484

WHITE SUGAR (FOB)

Reuters		Oct	307.0-06.0
Spot: n/a		Dec	308.0-07.5
Mar	304.5-04.0	Mar	310.5-08.0
May	310.5-09.5	May	313.5-06.0
Aug	312.2-12.0		Volume: 2629

MEAT & LIVESTOCK COMMISSION

Average fatstock prices at representative markets on December 15

(p/kg lw)	Pig	Sheep	Cattle
GB:	66.99	86.78	91.78
(+/-)	+2.95	-8.54	-5.06
Eng/Wales:	67.18	87.61	91.45
(+/-)	+3.31	-8.10	-4.30
(%)	+30.0	-16.0	+7.0
Scotland:	60.90	83.17	94.25
(+/-)	-8.45	-10.20	-9.76
(%)	+28.0	-4.0	-5.0

ICIS-LOR (London 6.00pm)

CRUDE OILS ($/barrel FOB)

Brent Physical	16.95	+0.05
Brent 15 day (Feb)	17.50	n/c
Brent 15 day (Mar)	17.60	n/c
W Texas Intermediate (Feb)	18.40	n/c
W Texas Intermediate (Mar)	18.60	n/c

PRODUCTS ($/MT)

Spot CIF NW Europe (prompt delivery)

	Bid	Offer
Premium Unld	175 (-2)	179 (-3)
Gasoil EEC	160 (-2)	162 (-2)
3.5 Fuel Oil	80 (-1)	82 (-1)
Naphtha	172 (-2)	174 (-2)

IPE FUTURES (GNI Ltd)

GAS OIL

Jan	160.25-60.75	Apr	161.25-61.50
Feb	161.25-61.50	May	161.25-61.50
Mar	161.00-61.25		Vol: 12763

BRENT (6.00pm)

Jan	17.20-17.24	Apr	17.59-17.61
Feb	*17.41-17.43*	*May*	*17.60-17.70*
Mar	17.51-17.53		Vol: 38434

GNI LONDON GRAIN FUTURES

LIFFE WHEAT (close £/t)

Jan	82.35
Mar	84.35
May	86.35
Jul	88.35
Sep	82.00
	Volume: 245

LIFFE BARLEY (close £/t)

Jan	75.50
Mar	78.30
May	79.25
Sep	78.90
Nov	80.90
	Volume: 53

LIFFE POTATO (£/t)

	Open	Close
Mar	unq	91.0
Apr	112.5	113.0
May	unq	123.0
		Volume: 13

RUBBER (No 1 RSS Cif p/kg)

Jan 45.50-46.00

LIFFE BIFFEX (GNI Ltd $10/pt)

	High	Low	Close
Dec 97	unq	—	1370
Jan 98	1200	1180	1200
Feb 98	1207	1190	1200
Apr 98	1290	1280	1290
Vol: 389 lots		*Open interest: 1624*	

Index 1286 -3

LONDON METAL EXCHANGE

(Official) (Volume prev day)	Cash	3mth	Rudolf Wolff Vol
Copper Gde A ($/tonne)	1730.0-1731.0	1759.0-1760.0	2492500
Lead ($/tonne)	525.00-526.00	535.50-536.00	303750
Zinc Spec Hi Gde ($/tonne)	1102.0-1102.5	1127.0-1127.5	40899
Tin ($/tonne)	5355.0-5360.0	5265.0-5270.0	31180
Aluminium Hi Gde ($/tonne)	1501.0-1502.0	1527.5-1528.0	4644100
Nickel ($/tonne)	5925.0-5930.0	6005.0-6010.0	229950

LIFFE OPTIONS

	Series	Calls Jan	Calls Apr	Calls Jul	Puts Jan	Puts Apr	Puts Jul
ASDA	160	18	22½	27	2	5	7
(*174)	180	6½	11½	16	10	13½	15½
Abbey Nat	1050	101½	136½	162½	17	50½	68
(*1125½)	1100	68½	108	137	34	73	93
All&Leic	800	58½	80½	97	13	27½	36½
(*845½)	850	29	53½	70½	33½	50	60½
Alld Dom	500	48	63½	76	5	16	21½
(*539½)	550	17	36	52	22½	37	43½
BAA	460	47½	64	73	4½	13½	22
(*499½)	500	21	40½	52½	17½	29½	38
BAT Ind	550	36	58	68½	17½	41	48
(*564½)	600	14	34	46½	45½	70	76½
Barclays	1700	119	180	236	55	102½	131½
(*1762)	1800	65½	130	187	103	150	181
Bass	850	61½	94½	103½	11	30	39
(*895)	900	30½	66	79½	30½	52	61½
Boots	850	58	89	105½	15	32	44½
(*887)	900	31	62½	78½	35½	54½	66½
Br Airways	550	39½	63½	76½	13	26	34
(*574)	600	15	39	52	38	50½	57½
BP	800	42½	73	92½	23	44½	58
(*816)	850	20½	51½	68½	49	69½	82½
Br Steel	130	12	18½	22	3	6½	10½
(*139)	140	6½	13	17	6½	11	15½
C&W	500	46½	65	75½	9½	22½	31
(*536½)	550	18½	39½	50	30	46	55½
CU	900	58	91	102½	41½	78	80
(*909)	950	36	68½	80	69½	106½	107½
Glaxo	1400	92½	137½	178½	37	80½	98½
(*1447)	1450	65	111½	153½	56½	104½	123
HSBC	1500	137½	210½	259½	63	133	158
(*1572½)	1600	85	162	213	111	184½	209½
Halifax	750	32	54½	72½	14	36½	42½
(*763½)	800	10	31	49½	42½	64½	70
ICI	950	42	69	95½	31½	61½	77
(*955½)	1000	21	47½	73½	60½	91	105
Land Sec	1000	46	66	76½	30½	46	56½
(*1000)	1050	24½	43	53	61	73½	84
M&S	600	35	54½	67	14	24	35½
(*617½)	650	13	31½	43	40	49½	60½
Natl Pwr	600	24	52½	62½	23	38½	48
(*601½)	650	6½	32½	41½	55½	66	77½
Nat West	1030	60	89	112	52½	93	94½
(*1062½)	1100	42	75½	—	32½	122½	—
Reuters	650	44	64½	79	13½	37	45
(*671)	700	20½	41	55	39½	63½	67
P&Sun	600	47	68	78½	15½	37	46
(*629)	650	20½	44½	54	39½	62½	71
Safeway	330	18½	33	37½	10½	19½	21½
(*337)	360	7½	21	25½	28	33½	38
Sainsbury	500	29	44	57	12	20½	30
(*516)	550	8	23½	33½	41	47½	56½
Shell	450	24½	—	—	12½	—	—
(*458½)	500	6½	19	28	44½	52	58
SmKl Bch	650	33	60½	80½	26½	47½	58½
(*651½)	675	22	48½	—	40½	80½	—
Std Char	650	61	79½	104½	23½	43½	55½
(*688½)	700	34	51	80½	46½	67	81
Thames W	900	46	71½	91	18	34	47
(*931½)	950	19	47	64½	43½	57½	72
Vodafone	420	36½	54	64½	16	27	35½
(*438½)	460	18½	34	45½	36½	47½	54½
Woolwich	330	13½	21½	25½	11½	18½	22½
(*330½)	360	4½	10	15½	31½	37½	40½
Zeneca	2000	92	157	216	61½	115½	139
(*2024)	2100	51½	111½	167	117½	167½	190½
	Series	Calls Feb	Calls May	Calls Aug	Puts Feb	Puts May	Puts Aug
BTR	180	13	19½	24½	11½	19½	20½
(*180½)	200	6	12	17	23½	32	33½
Blue Cir	330	22½	30½	36½	15	23½	29
(*332½)	360	10½	18	24	33	41½	47
Br Aero	1700	119½	173	218½	59	95½	119
(*1741)	1800	72	122½	168	109½	145	167½
Br Telcm	465	29	—	—	18	—	—
(*480)	515	9½	—	—	46	—	—
Cadbury	600	52	66	75½	10½	25½	29½
(*633)	650	23	40	49½	33	50	53½
Energy Gp	600	61	70½	78	2½	10	11
(*647½)	650	28½	40	45	17	25	27½
Gallaher	330	35	41½	46½	9½	16½	18½
(*354)	360	17½	24½	31	22½	31	33
GEC	390	21	33½	41½	15½	22	31
(*393½)	420	9	20½	28½	33	39	48
	Series	Calls Feb	Calls May	—	Puts Feb	Puts May	—
Grnd Met	550	59½	68½	—	10	22	—
(*590½)	600	30½	41½	—	30½	45	—
	Series	Calls Feb	Calls May	Calls Aug	Puts Feb	Puts May	Puts Aug
Guinness	550	57½	72	80½	11	21	23½
(*591)	600	28	44½	52½	32	43	45½
Hanson	280	19½	27½	31	10	17½	19½
(*286)	300	11	18½	22	20½	28½	30½
Imp Tob	390	23	36	41	11	18½	24½
(*396½)	420	9½	23½	27½	28	34½	40½
Kingfshr	850	52½	71½	88½	38	62	67
(*850½)	900	31	50½	67	67½	90	94½
Lasmo	260	22	31½	35	8	13½	14½
(*271½)	280	12	22	25	16½	22½	24
Ladbroke	260	25½	35	41	6	12½	17½
(*277)	280	14½	24½	31	14	22	27
LucasVar	200	12½	20½	24½	8½	14½	16½
(*201)	220	5	12½	16	21	25½	28
P&O	650	54½	68	76	14	24½	35½
(*684)	700	26	41	50½	36	49	60
Prudentl	700	75½	93	111	23	39	49
(*748½)	750	47½	67	86	44	63	73½
Rio Tinto	700	56	68½	83½	25	47	55½
(*720)	750	32	45	60½	52	75	82
Redland	330	15½	16½	16	½	0½	½
(*343½)	360	½	0½	½	16½	18½	15½
R-Royce	240	14	21	27½	15	19½	27
(*241½)	260	6½	13	19½	26½	31	33
Tesco	500	29	42½	52½	20	32	33
(*502½)	550	11	22½	32	52	61	62
Utd Bisc	200	18	21	26	5	10½	13
(*211½)	220	7	11	15½	13	21	23½
	Series	Calls Dec	Calls Mar	Calls Jun	Puts Dec	Puts Mar	Puts Jun
BG PLC	283	10	28	34	1	13	17½
(*292)	305	½	17½	23	14½	25	28½
BSkyB	420	20½	45½	60½	2	23	32
(*440)	460	1	25½	41	22	45	51½
Br Bio	100	2½	20½	28	2	13½	17½
(*100½)	110	—	16½	22½	9½	18½	22
Centrica	90	2	9	12	1	7	9
(*91)	100	—	5	7½	9	13	15
Dixons	600	7½	45	64	4	35½	45½
(*600½)	650	—	24½	42	49½	83	72½
EMI	460	7	39	57	3	31	40½
(*463½)	492	—	25½	—	28½	50	—
Granada	850	35½	67	86½	—	25	38½
(*885½)	900	1½	42	60	17	51½	60
GUS	750	8	50½	69	6½	39½	48½
(*751)	800	—	30½	47	49	69½	77½
Llyds TSB	750	28½	75	94	1½	42	53
(*778½)	800	2	50	69	24	65½	75
Lonrho	80	9	14½	17½	—	4	6½
(*89)	90	1	9½	13	2	9	11½
Norwich	390	5½	28	36½	3	19½	27½
(*392)	420	—	16	23½	28	37	45
Orange	240	18	30	36½	—	8½	12½
(*256)	260	1½	18½	25	4	17½	21½
Railtrck	900	48	102½	130	½	32½	50
(*947½)	950	11	77½	107	12½	59½	72
Scot Pwr	500	32½	50	68½	½	16	27½
(*532)	550	2	26	43½	20½	40½	52
Tarmac	110	1½	8½	11	1	6	8½
(*110½)	120	—	4½	6½	9½	12	14½
Tomkins	280	11	21½	30	—	11	15
(*290½)	300	½	13½	23	9½	20½	24½
Unilever	500	22	45	55	1	15½	25½
(*521½)	525	4½	30½	41½	9	26½	37

December 16 Total: 33141 Calls: 22485 Puts: 10656

FTSE INDEX (*5208)

Strike	Calls Dec	Calls Jan	Calls Feb	Calls Mar	Calls Jun	Puts Dec	Puts Jan	Puts Feb	Puts Mar	Puts Jun
5050	180	270	353	378½	—	10	80	124½	182½	—
5100	136½	232	317	347½	473½	16½	92½	141	181	257
5150	96	197	281½	316½	—	28½	110	159	200½	—
5200	62	167½	245	285½	409½	47	131½	177½	220	295½
5250	37	137	213	255	—	73	153½	199	240	—
5300	20	111	183	225½	345½	111½	180	224½	263	337
5350	9½	90	159½	202½	—	157	211	254½	291	—
5400	4½	70	136½	180½	298½	207	245	285½	319	331½

December 16 Total: 8328 Calls: 5827 Puts: 2501

*Underlying security price

LONDON FINANCIAL FUTURES

	Period	Open	High	Low	Sett	Vol
Long Gilt Previous open interest 190785	Dec 97	120-27	121-02	120-24	120-28	2400
	Mar 98	121-15	121-27	121-08	121-13	50887
German Govt Bond (Bund) Previous open interest 269180	Mar 98	104.54	104.64	104.42	104.53	95299
	Jun 98	103.89	104.04	103.89	103.95	500
German Govt Bond (Bobl) Previous open interest 11511	Mar 98	104.00	104.07	103.94	103.98	4989
	Jun 98				103.40	0
Italian Govt Bond (BTP) Previous open interest 120345	Mar 98	115.45	115.64	115.33	115.53	22855
	Jun 98				114.95	0
Japanese Govt Bond (JGB)	Mar 98	129.80	129.89	129.69	129.87	1133
	Jun 98				129.390	
Three Mth Sterling	Dec 97	92.29	92.30	92.28	92.28	17978
	Mar 98	92.36	92.40	92.35	92.39	21988
Previous open interest 800093	Jun 98	92.47	92.51	92.46	92.50	17005
Three Mth Euromark Previous open interest 1756827	Jan 98	96.28	96.29	96.28	96.29	954
	Jun 98	95.98	96.00	95.97	95.98	28262
Three Mth Eurolira Previous open interest 530396	Mar 98	94.66	94.66	94.61	94.63	17863
	Jun 98	95.23	95.26	95.22	95.24	8055
Three Mth Euroswiss Previous open interest 120325	Mar 98	98.19	98.24	98.16	98.20	11519
	Jun 98	97.99	98.07	97.99	98.05	3692
Three Mth ECU Previous open interest 31432	Mar 98	95.49	95.50	95.49	95.50	697
	Jun 98	95.48	95.49	95.47	95.47	204
FTSE 100 *Previous open interest 67066*	Dec 97	5157.0	5230.0	5155.0	5218.0	18990
	Mar 98	*5305.0*	*5280.0*	*5205.0*	*5269.0*	*13862*

MONEY RATES (%)

Base Rates: Clearing Banks 7¼ Finance Hse 7½

Discount Market Loans O/night high: 7¼ Low 6¾ Week fixed: 7⅛

Treasury Bills (Dis): Buy: 2 mth 7 ; 3 mth 7 . Sell: 2 mth 6¾ ; 3 mth 6¾ .

	1 mth	2 mth	3 mth	6 mth	12 mth
Prime Bank Bills (Dis)	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	
Sterling Money Rates	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Interbank	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

Overnight: open 7⅛, close 6¾ .

	1 mth	2 mth	3 mth	6 mth	12 mth
Local Authority Deps	7½	n/a	7⅝	7⅝	7⅝
Sterling CDs	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Dollar CDs	5.84	n/a	5.80	5.80	5.86
Building Society CDs	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

EUROPEAN MONEY DEPOSITS (%)

Currency	7 day	1 mth	3 mth	6 mth	Call
Dollar	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Deutschemark	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	4-3
French Franc	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Swiss Franc	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Yen	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]-par

GOLD/PRECIOUS METALS (Baird & Co)

Bullion: Open $283.30-283.70 Close: $285.00-285.50 High: $285.30-285.80

Low: $283.00-283.50 AM: $283.25 PM: $285.50

Krugerrand: $291.50-293.50 (£178.00-180.00)

Platinum: $342.50 (£209.50) Silver: $5.95 (£3.645) Palladium: $188.00 (£115.0)

STERLING SPOT AND FORWARD RATES

Mkt Rates for Dec 16	Range	Close	1 month	3 month
Amsterdam	3.2694-3.2866	3.2840-3.2866	1¼-1⅛pr	3¼-3⅛pr
Brussels	59.850-60.208	60.097-60.208	24-19pr	61-54pr
Copenhagen	*11.054-11.114*	*11.106-11.114*	*[illegible]pr*	*1¼-1pr*
Dublin	1.1225-1.1299	1.1252-1.1296	17-11pr	54-48pr
Frankfurt	2.9006-2.9160	2.9138-2.9160	1¼-1pr	2½-2¼pr
Lisbon	296.54-298.05	297.74-298.05	[illegible]pr	2½-1¾pr
Madrid	*245.51-246.93*	*246.64-246.93*	62-51pr	*177-159pr*
Milan	2844.4-2859.0	2855.9-2859.0	41-25pr	116-94pr
Montreal	2.3152-2.3259	2.3239-2.3259	0.67-0.61pr	1.28-1.18pr
New York	1.6298-1.6346	1.6330-1.6338	0.243-0.222pr	0.72-0.69pr
Oslo	*11.882-11.947*	*11.933-11.947*	*[illegible]pr*	*1¼-1¼pr*
Paris	9.7170-9.7659	9.7586-9.7659	3½-3¼pr	9¼-9¼pr
Stockholm	12.668-12.737	12.723-12.737	[illegible]pr	1-¼pr
Tokyo	213.47-214.01	213.59-213.84	1½-1¼pr	3½-3¼pr
Vienna	*20.404-20.516*	*20.499-20.516*	*[illegible]pr*	*2-1¾pr*
Zurich	2.3422-2.3584	2.3561-2.3584	1½-1¼pr	3½-3¼pr

Source: Extel *Premium - pr. Discount - ds.*

DOLLAR RATES

Australia	1.5360-1.5384
Austria	12.53-12.54
Belgium (Com)	36.75-36.79
Canada	1.4223-1.4228
Denmark	6.7898-6.7198
France	5.9675-5.9685
Germany	1.7811-1.7816
Hong Kong	7.7490-7.7500
Ireland	1.4467-1.4517
Italy	*1746.15-1746.66*
Japan	130.75-130.80
Malaysia	3.8555-3.8650
Netherlands	2.0073-2.0078
Norway	*7.3043-7.3063*
Portugal	182.05-182.10
Singapore	1.7010-1.7030
Spain	150.88-150.97
Sweden	*7.7744-7.7821*
Switzerland	1.4387-1.4397

OTHER STERLING

Argentina peso*	1.6319-1.6346
Australia dollar	2.5117-2.5152
Bahrain dinar	0.6080-0.6220
Brazil real*	1.8197-1.8242
China yuan	13.365-13.665
Cyprus pound	0.8405-0.8595
Finland markka	8.6700-8.8110
Greece drachma	451.25-461.75
Hong Kong dollar	12.6588-12.6682
India rupee	63.66-64.96
Indonesia rupiah	*n/a*
Kuwait dinar KD	0.4925-0.5035
Malaysia ringgit	6.2960-6.3154
New Zealand dollar	2.8170-2.8221
Pakistan rupee	70.25 Buy
Saudi Arabia riyal	5.8725-6.0075
Singapore dollar	2.7777-2.7827
S Africa rand (com)	7.8960-8.0650
U A E dirham	5.9250-6.0610

*Barclays Treasury * Lloyds Bank*

FTSE VOLUMES

3i	717	Legal & Gn	4,500
ASDA Gp	5,300	Lloyds TSB	6,800
Abbey Ntl	4,500	LucasVarity	7,500
Allnce & Leic	2,700	Marks Spr	3,300
Allied Dom	787	NatWst Bk	4,000
AB Foods	421	Nat Grid	2,900
BAA	1,900	*Nat Power*	7,900
BAT Inds	8,900	Next	4,700
BG	11,300	Norwich Un	6,900
BOC	1,300	Orange	1,000
BP	*8,600*	*P & O*	2,200
BSkyB	5,200	Pearson	1,400
BTR	18,100	PowerGen	2,000
BT	8,200	Prudential	6,100
Bk of Scot	3,200	RMC	579
Barclays	2,300	Railtrack	1,700
Bass	3,300	Rank Group	2,100
Billiton	4,700	Reckitt Col	1,400
Blue Circle	1,800	Reed Intl	2,000
Boots	1,700	Rentokil	5,100
BAe	1,400	Reuters	5,600
BA	3,800	Rio Tinto	4,200
British Land	1,200	Rolls Royce	1,300
Brit Steel	11,500	Royal & Sun	5,900
Cable Wire	3,300	Royal Bk Sct	3,200
Cadbury	3,000	Safeway	5,800
Carlton Cms	5,600	Sainsbury	2,700
Centrica	*28,100*	*Schroders*	*159*
Cm Union	1,400	Scot & New	263
Dixons	6,600	Scot Power	3,200
EMI	3,400	Svrn Trent	858
Energy Gp	*715*	*Shell Trans*	*12,100*
Enterpr Oil	748	Siebe	2,800
GKN	1,100	SmKl Bch	17,000
GRE	1,900	Smiths Inds	540
GUS	*1,300*	*Std Chartd*	*2,100*
Gen Acc	1,100	Sun Life	194
Gen Elec	4,800	TI Gp	618
Glaxo Well	4,600	Tesco	4,900
Granada	*3,800*	*Thames W*	*613*
Grand Met	25,300	Tomkins	4,300
Guinness	29,000	Unilever	7,900
HSBC	*2,500*	Utd Utilities	1,400
Halifax	*9,500*	*Utd News*	*855*
Hays	489	Vodafone	21,300
ICI	2,200	Whitbread	380
Kingfisher	1,600	Williams	2,400
LASMO	*1,500*	*Wolseley*	*484*
Ladbroke	7,200	Woolwich	6,000
Land Secs	709	Zeneca	2,300

WALL STREET

	Dec 16 midday	Dec 15 close
AMP Inc	40⅛	40⅞
AMR Corp	129⅝	128⅞
AT & T	56½	57⅛
Abbott Labs	68⅜	67⅞
Advanced Micro	18⅞	18⅝
Aetna Life	79⅞	80½
Ahmanson (HF)	65	63⅞
Air Prod & Chem	76½	75⅞
AirTouch Comm	39	38⅛
Albertson's	46⅛	47
Alcan Alumnm	26⅞	26⅞
Allied Signal	36⅞	36
Alum Co of Am	70⅛	69⅝
Amerada Hess	52⅞	52⅞
AEP	50⅝	50⅝
Amer Express	90⅞	88⅞
Amer Genl Corp	55⅞	55½
Amer Home Pr	75⅞	74⅞
Amer Intl	104½	103½
Amer Stores	19⅛	19⅞
Amer Standard	40½	40⅛
Ameritech	79⅛	79½
Amgen	54½	53⅞
Amoco	86⅛	86⅝
Andrew Corp	24⅛	24
Anheuser-Busch	42⅞	42⅞
Apple Computer	14⅛	13⅞
Archer Daniels	21½	21½
Armco	4⅛	4⅞
Armstrng Wrld	74⅛	74⅞
Asarco	23⅛	23½
Atl Richfield	78⅞	78⅞
Atmel Corp	18⅛	19⅛
Auto Data Pro	55½	55½
Avery Dennison	42⅞	43
Avon Products	62½	61⅞
Baker Hughes	40½	40½
Baltim Gas & El	31½	31⅞
Banc One	56⅛	56⅞
BankAmerica	78⅞	76½
Bank of NY	56⅞	56⅛
Bankers Tr NY	130⅛	130⅞
Barnett Banks	75⅛	75½
Bausch & Lomb	39⅞	39⅛
Baxter Intl	51⅞	50⅞
Bectn Dickinsn	51½	52⅞
Bell Atlantic	91⅞	90⅞
BellSouth	56½	56⅞
Black & Decker	39⅞	39⅞
Block (H&R)	45⅞	44⅞
Boeing	50½	48⅞
Boise Cascade	30⅛	30⅞
Boston Scien	44⅞	43⅞
Bristol Myrs Sq	97⅞	97⅞
Browning Ferris	36	34⅞
Brunswick	27½	26⅞
Burlingtn Nthn	96⅞	95⅞
CMS Energy Corp	39⅛	40⅞
CPC Intl	109⅞	107⅞
CSX	54	53½
CBS Corp	29⅞	30
Campbell Soup	59	58⅞
Carolina Pwr	39⅞	38⅞
Case Corp	61⅞	60½
Caterpillar	50⅛	50⅞
Central & SW	26½	26⅞
Champion Intl	45⅞	46
Chase Manhat	112½	112⅛
Chevron Corp	76½	76⅞
Chrysler	36⅞	36
Chubb Corp	77⅛	78½
Cigna Corp	164⅞	161½
Citicorp	131½	131½
Clorox	79⅞	80
Coastal Corp	60	59⅞
Coca Cola	65½	65⅛
Coca Cola Ent	33⅞	33⅞
Colgate-Palm	66⅛	66⅛
Columbia Gas	76½	79⅛
ColumbiaHCA	28⅞	29½
Compaq Comp	57⅛	54⅞
Comp Ass Int	50⅛	40
Conagra	38⅞	37⅞
Cons Edison	40⅞	39⅞
Cons Nat Gas	59⅞	59½
Cooper Inds	50	50⅞
Corestates	80½	80⅛
Corning Inc	37⅞	38½
C'wide Credit	41⅛	41½
Crestar Finl	56⅞	56⅞
Crown Cork	51⅞	49⅞
Dana Corp	46½	45⅞
Dayton Hudson	69½	71⅞
Deere	57½	56
Delta Air Lines	119⅛	118⅞
Deluxe Corp	36⅞	36⅞
Digital Equip	39⅞	39
Dillard Dept St	35⅞	35½
Disney (Walt)	96	97½
Dominion Res	40⅞	40⅞
Donnelley (RR)	37½	37½
Dover Corp	34⅞	34⅞
Dow Chemical	99⅛	98½
Dow Jones	54⅞	53⅞
Dresser	40⅞	40⅞
Duke Power	53⅞	54
Dun & Bradstreet	29½	28⅞
Du Pont	62½	61
Eastman Chem	57⅛	58½
Eastman Kodak	54½	54

	Dec 16 midday	Dec 15 close
Eaton Corp	93	93½
Edison Int	26⅞	26⅞
Elect Data Sys	42½	39⅞
Emerson Elec	57	56⅛
Engelhard Corp	18⅞	18⅞
Enron Corp	40⅞	40⅞
Entergy	27½	27⅞
Ethyl Corp	8½	8⅞
Exxon	63⅞	62⅞
FMC Corp	65⅛	65½
FPL Group	57⅛	57½
Federal Express	61½	62⅞
Fifth Third Banc	83	82½
Fleet Finl Grp	74⅞	73⅞
Fluor Corp	38⅞	38⅛
Ford Motor	48½	47⅞
Fort James	38½	37½
Fortune Brands	36⅞	36⅞
Franklin Res	93½	93⅞
GTE Corp	49⅞	49⅞
Gannett	60⅛	59½
Gap Inc Del	55⅞	55
Gateway 2000	30½	29⅛
Gen Dynamics	86½	86⅞
Gen Electric	75⅞	74½
Gen Mills	76½	78½
Gen Motors	64½	63⅞
Gen Reinsurance	219	219⅞
Gen Signal	41½	41½
Genuine Parts	32⅞	32⅞
Georgia Pac	84½	85½
Gillette	101⅛	100⅛
Glaxo Wellc ADR	47⅞	46½
Goodrich (BF)	43⅞	43⅞
Goodyear Tire	66⅞	66⅞
Great Lakes	44⅞	43⅛
Halliburton	50⅛	48½
Harcourt General	54⅞	54⅞
Heinz (HJ)	53½	53⅞
Hercules	47⅞	47⅞
Hershey Foods	62½	63⅞
Hewlett Packard	63⅞	61⅞
Hilton Hotels	27⅞	27⅞
Home Depot	59⅛	58⅞
Homestake Mng	10⅛	9⅞
Honeywell	68⅛	67⅞
Household Intl	125	124⅞
Houston Inds	24½	24⅞
Humana	20⅞	20⅞
ITT Corp	77⅛	77½
Ikon Office	26⅞	29⅞
Illinois Tool	55⅞	55½
Illinova	25⅞	25
INCO	17⅛	17⅛
Ingersoll Rand	41⅞	40⅞
Inland Steel	16⅞	16⅛
Intel Corp	73½	72½
IBM	104½	100⅞
Intl Flav & Fr	49½	50⅞
Intl Paper	43½	43⅞
Jhnsn & Jhnsn	65⅛	65
Kellogg	49½	49½
Kerr-McGee	64½	64⅞
Kimberly-Clark	49½	49⅞
Kmart	11½	11
Knight-Ridder	51½	51⅞
Lilly (Eli)	65½	65½
Limited Inc	24½	24⅞
Lincoln Nat	74½	75⅛
Litton	56⅞	55
Liz Claiborne	45½	49⅛
Lockheed Martin	96½	98⅞
Louisiana Pac	19	19⅞
MCI Comm	44⅞	43⅞
Manpower Inc	*33*	*33*
Marriott Int	68⅞	68⅞
Marsh & McLen	75⅞	74½
Masco Corp	52⅞	52⅞
May Dept St	53½	54
Maytag Corp	36½	37½
McDonalds	46½	46½
McGraw Hill	72⅛	71⅞
Mead Corp	27⅞	28⅞
Meditrust Corp	37	37⅛
Medtronic	50⅛	50½
Mellon Bk	60⅞	60⅞
Merck Inc	105½	105½
Mercury Fin	0⅞	0⅞
Merrill Lynch	74⅛	71½
Microsoft	139⅞	136½
Minnesota Mine	94⅞	92⅞
Mirage Resorts	21⅞	22⅛
Mobil Corp	74⅞	73⅞
Monsanto	41½	41½
Morgan (JP)	120½	119⅛
Motorola Inc	58⅛	57⅞
Mylan Labs	19½	19⅞
Natl Semi	25½	24½
Natl Service Ind	47	46½
Navistar Int	23½	22⅛
NY Times A	69½	67⅞
Newmont Mng	27⅞	27½
Nike B	45⅞	44⅞
NL Industries	13½	12⅛
Nordstrom	59½	60½
Norfolk Sthrn	31	31
Nthn State Pwr	57⅞	57⅞
Norwest Corp	38⅞	38⅛
Occidental Pet	29½	29½
Oracle	23½	23⅞

	Dec 16 midday	Dec 15 close
Oryx Energy Co	24⅞	24⅞
Owens Corning	35⅞	34⅞
PPG Industries	56⅛	57
PMI Group	70½	69⅞
PNC Bank	58⅞	58⅛
PP&L Res	22⅞	22½
Paccar Inc	59⅛	55⅞
Pacificorp	24½	24½
Pac Enterprises	36½	36⅞
Pall Corp	21½	21⅛
Parker Hannifin	46½	44⅞
Peco Energy	23½	22½
Penney (JC)	62⅞	62½
Pennzoil	67⅞	66⅞
Pepsico	34⅞	36⅞
Pfizer	76½	75⅞
Pharm & Upjhn	35⅞	35⅞
Phelps Dodge	64½	64⅞
Philip Morris	45⅞	44⅞
Phillips Pet	48⅛	48⅞
Pitney Bowes	89⅛	88⅞
Polaroid	43½	42½
Procter & Gmbl	82⅛	80⅞
Providian	44½	45
Pub Serv E & G	29⅞	29½
Quaker Oats	52⅞	53⅞
Ralston Purina	94⅞	95⅞
Raychem Corp	45⅛	44⅞
Raytheon	54½	54
Reebok Intl	30⅛	30
Reliastar Fin	39½	38½
Reynolds Metals	60½	59⅞
Rockwell Intl	52⅛	51⅞
Rohm & Haas	90⅞	89⅞
Royal Dutch	55⅞	54½
Rubbermaid	24⅞	24⅛
SBC Comms	73⅞	73⅞
Safeco Corp	50⅛	50⅛
St Paul's Cos	83½	83
Sara Lee Corp	55⅞	54⅞
Schering Plough	60⅞	59⅞
Schlumberger	80⅞	78½
Seagram	31⅞	31½
Sears Roebuck	44⅞	45⅞
Shell Trans	44½	44⅞
Sherwin Wlms	28⅞	29½
Silicon Graphics	13⅞	13⅞
Snap-On-Tools	45⅞	45½
Southern Co	23⅞	23½
Southtrust	61½	59⅞
Sprint Corp	59⅞	58½
Stanley Works	44½	44½
Sun Company	42⅞	43
Sun Microsys	37½	35⅞
Suntrust	73½	74⅞
Supervalu	40⅞	40½
Synovus Fin	33⅞	33
Sysco Corp	45½	44½
TRW Inc	55½	55⅞
TIG Hldgs	31⅞	31½
Tandy Corp	39	38⅞
Temple Inland	52⅞	52½
Tenet Healthcare	33⅞	34½
Tenneco	39½	39½
Texaco	57½	54⅞
Texas Inst	43½	42½
Texas Utilities	40½	40½
Textron	62½	61⅞
Thermo Elect	37⅞	37½
Time Warner	60½	59½
Times-Mirror A	59½	59½
Timken	34½	34⅞
Torchmark	41½	41½
Toys R Us	31⅞	32
Transamerica	111½	112½
Travelers	55	53⅞
Tribune	59⅞	59½
UST Inc	34½	34½
US Bancorp	114½	114½
UAL	88½	89½
Unitrin	66	64½
US Inds	27⅞	27½
US West Comm	45½	45½
US West Media	28⅞	28⅞
USAirways Group	62⅞	61⅞
USX Marathon	34⅞	34⅞
Unicom	30⅛	29½
Unilever NV	62⅞	61⅞
Union Camp	53	53⅞
Union Carbide	45½	45½
Union Pacific	61½	61⅞
Unisys Corp	13½	12⅞
USF&G Corp	23⅞	22½
United Tech	73½	72½
Unocal Corp	39	38½
VF Corp	46	46½
Wal-Mart Stores	41½	41½
Warner-Lambert	111½	110½
Waste Mngmt	27⅞	26½
Wells Fargo	337½	337⅞
Weyerhaeuser	48½	48½
Whirlpool	55⅞	56⅛
Whitman	26	26
Winn Dixie	42⅞	42⅞
Witco Corp	41½	41½
Woolworth	21⅞	20⅞
Wrigley (Wm) Jr	80½	80½
Xerox	71⅞	72½
Xilinx Inc	33⅞	33⅞

هكذا من الأصل

هكذا من الإصل

Labour wields stick before dangling carrot

It is the richest of ironies that new Labour which, *in opposition*, inspired awe for its presentational skills, now finds itself skewered on its cack-handed packaging of policies that have much to recommend them.

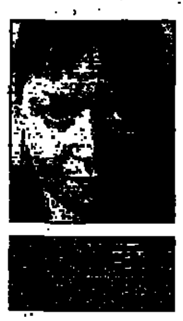
Last week's debacle over cutting the *premium* on child benefit for lone mothers is a dismaying case in point. Much of Labour's analysis on single mothers and, more broadly, its Welfare to Work aspirations are spot on.

It is true that the best route out of poverty for many lone mothers is through work. The Policy Studies Institute, oft cited by Harriet Harman, has found that lone parents are, on average, more than £50 a week better off in work. *Presumably its figures* take into account the fact that many lone mothers suffer from a low level of skills, and when in work, command poor salaries.

It is also right that the old answer of increasing benefits as a route out of poverty has been rejected. It has been proven beyond all reasonable doubt that the most efficient modern economy is the one that provides the proper structure of incentives for people to help themselves and gently discourages reliance on the State. In seeking to dismantle a culture of dependency, the Government is *right to* employ the carrot of New Deals (whether for lone mothers or the long-term unemployed) but also the stick of making life for those on benefit just a touch more uncomfortable. It has, for example, been proved that countries that put a time limit on unemployment benefit, have got more long-term jobless into work.

What is so wrong about the way that the Government has gone about the issue of lone parents is that it has employed the stick before any of its carrots have been effectively dangled. It has shown, through its new cross-departmental Social Exclusion Unit, for example, that it understands that a holistic approach is needed if it is to succeed in returning the disenfranchised to the economic mainstream. In the case of lone mothers, the Government seems to have mislaid both its good sense and its humanity.

Its justification for staging a fight over lone mothers has been disingenuous. The argument goes that cutting lone mother benefits was a Tory policy. Gordon Brown is committed to Tory spending plans. Ergo, he had to cut. This is nonsense. Mr Brown has found ways, within his inherited control total, of redistributing considerable resources to priority areas such as education and health. He could have found £60 million



from virtually anywhere. An embattled Tony Blair insisted that the policy was right because his party had been elected as the government of tight public finance. But there were plenty of other, better reasons why Labour was elected, not the least of which was that voters had come to despise a Conservative Party that, among other things, stigmatised single mothers. Not only that, pre-election opinion polls showed that more *than two thirds of the* electorate intended to vote for parties that they believed would raise taxes.

The fiscal machismo emanating from the Treasury, initially designed to gain the confidence of the markets, is becoming tiresome given the dominant view in the City that the public finances are in great shape and that the only reason for the current obsession with fiscal restraint is the Government's desire, like every government before it, to build a war chest in time for the next election.

There is, however, one understandable, reason why the Government risked so much to push through this policy at this juncture. *It clearly wanted to send a* signal that it wouldn't duck the "tough choices" ahead if it is genuinely to tackle the task of *modernising the* welfare state.

The Tories know exactly how tough this will be. Voters hate change, particularly change that penalises, even temporarily, the worse off or the most vulnerable. For all its radicalism, successive Conservative governments never dared to think the unthinkable on the welfare state and simply pared away benefit levels to net the Exchequer some cash. If Mr Brown succeeds in designing a system that leaves a safety *net for* the very poorest, provides incentives to self-reliance for others, struggling but aspiring, and persuades the better off to dig deeper in their own pockets to finance their own welfare, it will be some achievement. *He and his* officials should have sold the programme honestly on its potential long-term benefits.

The timing of the lone mother skirmish was still awful. The Government knows well that there are horrendous barriers to lone mothers working, including low skills, lack of confidence, glitches in the tax and benefit system which involve prohibitive marginal tax rates on entering work and a paucity of good-quality, affordable child care.

Some of these are being looked at but the infrastructure is nowhere near being in place. The Government's after-schools clubs will not be set up until well after the punitive benefit cut is exacted. Even then, they don't cater for *mothers with young babies* (nor their fear of leaving those babies in the hands of virtual strangers).

The Government may feel that the strongest possible signal of intent was an attack on the most vulnerable. It seems a gesture too far. *It was* certainly penal and certainly premature.

Falling unemployment could soon be at the turning point

Some economists think the long decline of workless may go into reverse, says **Philip Bassett**

How low can unemployment in Britain go? And after falling virtually constantly for almost five years, is the number of people out of work in the UK now on the turn and set to rise?

The Government will today announce the latest total of people out of work and claiming benefit. Ministers hope that general City estimates that unemployment will show a further fall are right, but some City forecasters suggest claimant count unemployment will soon start to increase.

The record of City economists in forecasting each month's unemployment total is not good. But this time they may be closer to being correct, prompting questions of how low unemployment can go, and whether it is now at or close to a turning point.

Labour has been concerned for some time that a number of economic factors will combine to start pushing unemployment up again at a time when the Government is taking flak over its Welfare to Work programme and trying to get lone single mothers and others off benefit and into work. That said, a rise in unemployment would mollify critics of the Government's New Deal jobs programme, who are sceptical that it will be necessary to counter youth unemployment if the number of young people *without work is falling.*

The Institute of Directors says today that the New Deal is much more likely to help the young rather than the long-term unemployed, with more than half its members surveyed ready to take on a young person and only 27 per cent preferring to take on someone out of work for a long period.

Ahead of today's figures, the Government yesterday published new research showing most unemployed people look for work steadfastly and are flexible in their job search. Keith Bradley, Social Security Minister, said the findings showed that "the great majority starting work felt that they were better off than they had been on benefit." With 5.2 per cent of the working population now out of work and claiming benefit — 1,464,300 in total — claimant unemployment is not only at its lowest level for 17 years, but it is now below the level seen during the Lawson inflationary boom of the late Eighties, according to a new report today from the Employment Policy Institute (EPI) jobs think-tank.

The EPI says: "Whether this in itself is a cause for concern depends on the level of unemployment the economy can now sustain." The think-tank concludes: "The official signs are therefore that the jobs recovery is likely, at best, to grind to a halt sometime during the next 18 months. At worst, the labour market improvement could go into reverse, with unemployment rising slightly."

That view was endorsed by yesterday's latest economic report on the UK from the OECD as part of its twice-yearly *Economic Outlook*. While the OECD said it still expected a soft landing for the British economy as growth slows, and that the Government's Welfare to Work programme should further help the working of the UK labour market, it said too that "the unemployment rate is unlikely to fall much further from current levels."

Some economic analysts in the City are going further. Economists at UBS, for instance, predict that today's unemployment figures will rise by 5,000, as increased uncertainty about the continued strength of the economy may be making employers reluctant to hire new staff.

Gordon Brown, the Chancellor and the Government's *chief job strategist, does not go* that far. But his pre-Budget Green Paper sounded a clear warning on jobs, noting that the UK has reached "a critical stage in the economic cycle, where wage inflation and skills shortages have in the past prevented unemployment from falling further."

Will they now combine to do so again? Business is certainly reporting skill shortages. CBI leaders warn that they are a greater barrier to an expansion of output than at any time since the end of the 1980s, though — at the moment, at least — they are insisting that such shortages are patchy, with pockets in particular areas and sectors, rather than any overall famine.

On wages, average earnings growth is now solidly a full percentage point higher than it was a couple of years ago. While this is hardly racing acceleration, it has been enough to prompt the Bank of England towards further interest rate rises, and the Chancellor to issue increasingly tough warnings on pay, the *most recent of which explicitly* linked pay to jobs, and to the New Deal programme.

Even so, in historical terms pay pressures remain remarkably subdued, with the pattern of most wage settlements still around the 3-4 per cent level, according to most independent pay analysts. The Government's planned national minimum wage, which passed *another parliamentary* stage towards the statute book yesterday when the Commons gave the Bill to introduce it a second reading, may tick that up, as background papers on it from the Department of Trade and Industry acknowledge. But the Low Pay Commission, under Professor George Bain, is taking extremely seriously its remit to recommend a minimum wage rate *that is fully aware of its* impact on inflation and the wider economy.

Unemployment in Britain has fallen by more than 1.5 million from its most recent peak in December 1992 of 2,981,100. *Unadjusted unemployment*, the actual number of people out of work and claiming benefit, topped the three million mark at the time.

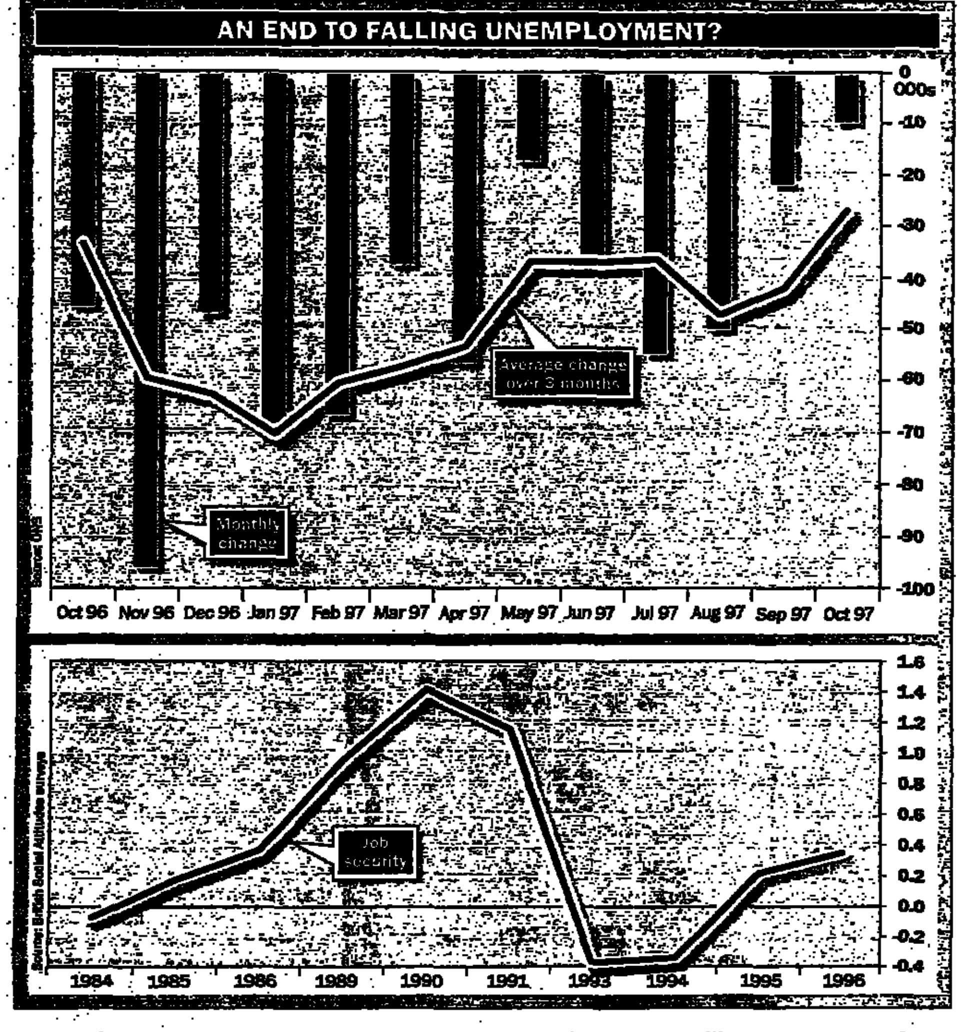
But the falls in claimant unemployment in recent *months have been getting* smaller, as the chart shows. A year ago, the introduction by the then-Conservative Government of the jobseeker's allowance (JSA) to replace the old unemployment benefit *played havoc with the claim*ant figures, with records being broken every month — falls of 66,000, 68,000, 95,000. This volatility has now calmed down as JSA has bedded in, but at just 9,500, last month's fall was the lowest since early 1996. The average change over three months — judged as a better guide to the underlying trend — has now dropped markedly.

But even with falling unemployment and new job announcements, redundancies and job dismissals have remained a feature of the labour market.

In spring this year, the most *recent period for which figures* from the Government's Labour Force Survey are available, 460,000 people were made redundant or were dismissed — down only 20,000 from the total of two years *before.*

This might explain why feelings of job insecurity, though better than they were as the graph of a job security index shows, are still in evidence.

Employment analysts and business leaders are concerned that the continuing strength of sterling will lead to



more job losses, combining with skill shortages and wage pressures to push up unemployment. While the impact of sterling's appreciation has yet to show up fully in the official trade figures, or in the jobless totals, jobs are continuing to go, especially in manufacturing, which is being hit hard by the strong pound.

Redundancy figures from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) show a surge in the number of redundancies in manufacturing. In autumn last year, at 44,000 they formed 24 per cent of the total redundancies recorded. By *spring that was up to* 61,000, or 30 per cent of the total. New figures from the ONS today are expected to show a further rise.

Whitehall is clearly worried that if unemployment falls much further, inflation will start to rise. In a new analysis published today by the EPI, the National Institute of Economic and Social Research suggests that the sustainable or "steady state" rate of unemployment may now have fallen from around 8-9 per cent at the end of the Eighties to about 7 per cent now.

In line with most economic estimates of the so-called natural rate of unemployment, this is suspiciously close to the current claimant unemployment rate, and Ray Barrell and Rebecca Riley from the National Institute suggest today that inflationary pressures would already have been higher had it not been for the strength of sterling over the past year. They point out, too, that economic *inactivity in the* UK labour market has risen, especially for men.

Some quarter of a million more men have become economically *inactive* during the course of this recovery, equivalent *to a third of the fall in* male unemployment since 1993, and they suggest that as a result, the UK's sustainable rate of employment has barely changed, leaving Fifties and Sixties style full employment *still a long way off.*

That means that unemployment could fall a good deal further than its present level. But some economists are starting to stick their necks out and are suggesting that unemploy*ment in Britain may now* finally be on the cusp. Today's figures could indicate whether they are right.

BUSINESS LETTERS

Our tax-free products will not be in Isa

From the Chief Executive, National Savings

Sir, Mr W. R. Whittle (Letters, December 12) is mistaken in suggesting that it is the Government's intention to include the existing tax-free National Savings instruments in Isas.

National Savings offers a wide variety of products, some of which are tax-free and some of which are not. The Inland Revenue's Consultative Document clearly defines the National Savings products which would be eligible for holding within the cash component of Isas as those "the returns of which *are not otherwise tax-free*".

This means, subject to ratification of the proposals, that investors will be able to hold National Savings Certificates (both fixed-interest and index-linked), Premium Bonds and Children's Bonus Bonds, all of *which offer tax-free returns, in addition* to whatever investments they choose to put within the ISA wrapper.

The National Savings products that will be eligible for the tax concessions offered by Isas *are those that pay interest* gross, but it is probable that we will also be developing new products specifically tailored to Isas.

Yours faithfully,
PETER BAREAU,
Chief Executive,
National Savings,
Charles House,
375 Kensington High Street,
W14.

Rail stop shopping next down the line

From Mr John Glover

Sir, Maybe some airports are glorified shopping centres (letters, December 9, 12), but what about the private railway station?

At Railtrack's 14 major stations, it is planned "to combine necessary . . . works with commercial development, including better retail facilities. Forecast profits . . . have been taken into account by the Rail Regulator in determining access charges (to rail operators), and will thus be used to the benefit of the industry".

Over £25 million will be spent at each of Paddington, Waterloo, Glasgow Central and Edinburgh Waverley.

Railtrack's intent is to create a relaxing environment, it says in the company's Network Management Statement 1996-97 (page 42).

If it also brings more passengers to the railway, who can complain? What, indeed, are the alternatives?

Yours faithfully,
JOHN GLOVER,
3 Northcliffe Close,
Worcester Park,
Surrey.

Track record less than promising

From Mr Paul Twyman

Sir, Your City Diary (December 12) is quite right to draw attention to Railtrack's plans to close Blackfriars station and to cast doubt on their promises to keep disruption to a minimum.

A small but significant insight into Railtrack's attitude is given by their performance on the Kent Coast Line to Ramsgate. Most of us have stopped travelling to Victoria by train at weekends because of track works which, virtually every weekend, cause considerable inconvenience and an increase in journey time from 1½ hours to almost three hours.

This happens every year from September to April. Railtrack, who, incidentally, held up the introduction of new rolling stock on this line for nearly two years, seem to care little for the poor passengers. The operating companies appear powerless to influence them. So more power to the Corporation of London, I say.

Yours faithfully,
PAUL TWYMAN,
Thrift House, Minnis Road,
Birchington on Sea, Kent.

Prospects for UK inflation in 1998

From Mr M. C. Fitzpatrick

Sir, Janet Bush in her column (December 10) notes that imports typically represent a fifth *of UK consumer spending, and* also points out that the strength of sterling has made these imports cheaper. She also suggests that there is little threat of the current underlying inflation rate (2.8 per cent in the year to November 30) accelerating in 1998. I am not sure she is correct to be so sanguine.

The trade weighted index of sterling rose 13 per cent between November 1996 and November 1997. On the basis that this should have made some fifth of the goods and services purchased by consumers some 13 per cent cheaper, then inflation may well be up to 2.6 per cent (ie 13 per cent x ⅕) lower than it would have been had sterling remained static over the last year. It is unlikely that the inflation rate in the year to November 30, 1998 will be flattered by any further rise in sterling, with the result that (other things remaining equal) infla*tion could jump to around 5* per cent by November 1998. A fall in the sterling exchange over the next year, as opposed to the mere absence of the sterling appreciation effect currently enjoyed, could push that *5 per cent even higher.*

On this basis, it seems inevitable that the Bank will have to raise interest rates in the new year. Meanwhile our economic model, which is based on the economic growth forecasts and unemployment calculation parameters set out in the Treasury's 1997 *Pre-Budget Report*, suggests that unemployment will start going up in the third quarter of 1998.

Yours faithfully,
M. C. FITZPATRICK,
Chantrey Vellacott,
10-12 Russell Square, WC1.

Max factor

GIVEN the length of Geoffrey Robinson's career — both as a politician and as a businessman — one would have thought he would have learnt how to avoid danger. However, many in the City have long had concerns about the Paymaster General's associations with the late Robert Maxwell. And what few *followers of the Orion Trust* affair have noticed is the role of a certain Ron Codrington.

A quick look at the annual report of TransTec, the company that Robinson founded and chaired until he joined the Government, shows that Codrington has been the group's company secretary *for a couple of* years. But what did he do prior to that? Well, I can reveal that he was actually company secretary to Maxwell Communication Corporation and scores of private companies controled by the publishing tycoon prior to his death in 1991.

Of course the fact that Codrington was at the centre of the Maxwell empire does not imply that he knew anything about the disappearance of hundreds of millions of pounds of *pensioners'* money. And I am sure that the Paymaster General questioned him closely before making the appointment.

PUGH
BASS SELLS PUBS TO BANKERS TRUST

"What's prompted you to think about a career in banking"

Mutual friend

IF THE embattled Paymaster General is looking for friends, he may not find many in the building society world. Some were miffed by remarks made by Robinson in a Commons building *society debate in June:*

Commenting on the long-term effects of conversions on customers, the minister said that the experience to date "had not been discouraging". Such assurances were not music to the ears of building society bosses who believe that mutuality is better for both borrowers and savers. Adding insult to injury, Robinson claimed that Abbey National, the first society to convert, had "largely maintained its customer profile". Building society folk argued that, although Abbey never calls itself a bank, it behaves *like one. In the latest round of mort*gage rate rises, Abbey was the first to put up its rates.

Festive tidings

FURTHER to my item yesterday about the strange similarity between last year's advert for Nabarro Nathanson and this year's for Dresdner RCM Global Investors, I note the hard-edged Christmas message that the lawyers are putting out on the Internet. If you log on to the Nabarro Web site, the first thing you see is "Season's greetings to you all" closely followed by the jolly message: "Proposed law to punish thieves of company secrets."

Bitter news

EVEN more jollity is to be had at St Martin's Le Grand, the City headquarters of Nomura International, which held its Christmas party on Monday. But the seasonal mood was *dampened by some news from* Prague. The Czech Government had blocked the merger of Radegast, a brewer controlled by Nomura, with rival Plzensky Prazdroj. It seems that a certain British brewer had raised some objections.

This brewer happened to be the same one that later in the day told Nomura it was declining an offer from the Japanese group for its pubs and selling them to Bankers Trust. I assume that Nomura will not be toast*ing the new year with any Bass beers.*

☐ *SO DESPERATE was the Prudential to admit responsibility for its wrongdoing yesterday, that it issued a response to the latest regulatory flagellation before the statement from the Financial Services Authority, the new super-regulator, came out. Such efficiency in saying sorry has to be admired in a company which, the FSA claims, had a "cultural disposition against compliance".*

Catcall

PROOF positive of the chasm within the Tory party is the fact that Kenneth Clarke, the former Chancellor, has split with colleagues and leapt to Tony Blair's defence. On what issue? Single mothers? EMU? Geoffrey Robinson? No. Humphrey the cat. According to Clarke, the Blairs were quite right to kick Humphrey out of Downing Street as she (the cat's sex was a well-kept secret) had "three fleas for every *hair and was never let into No 10 or* No 11".

JASON NISSÉ

Humphrey the cat "had three fleas for every hair"

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	Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld %
AIB GOVETT UNIT TRUST LTD				
0171 378 7979 Dealing: 0171 407 7888				
Protected Funds:				
UK Safeguard	141.41	150.70	+ 1.67	
Do NAV to Dec 19	136.83	136.83		
UK Equity Safeguard	110.39	118.04	+ 0.76	2.47
Do NAV to Sep 19	106.93	106.93		
Cash	956.11	960.89		5.75
UK Growth Funds				
UK Equity Gen	375.20	399.10	+ 7.30	1.72
UK Small Cos	78.27	83.71	+ 0.14	0.49
FTSE 250 Index	98.65	105.50	+ 0.17	2.11
Geared UK Index	2334.00	2483.94	+ 34.00	5.75
Income Funds				
Corp Bd	81.59	84.42	+ 0.07	
Monthly Inc	42.28	45.19†	+ 0.64	8.72
International Funds				
American Gen	292.80	310.30	+ 8.90	
American Strat	232.92	249.11	- 0.90	
JG US Index	2356.06	2481.42	+ 29.00	4.00
European Gen	325.70	344.50	+ 4.60	
European Strat	140.48	150.21	+ 0.86	
Japan Gen	102.30	108.40	+ 0.70	
Asia Pacific	65.91	70.32	- 0.63	1.08
Pacific Strat	105.06	112.36	- 0.10	..
Greater China	200.73	214.15	- 0.94	
Latin America	104.22	111.46†	- 3.07	
Int Growth	165.60	177.10	+ 0.57	
Balanced Exempt	154.60	160.00		
Global Strategy	46.88	50.12	- 0.45	
AXA EQUITY & LAW UNIT TST MGRS				
01203 553 231				
General Acc	945.00	999.90	+ 8.00	2.53
General Inc	685.80	732.50	+ 6.50	2.53
UK Growth Acc	584.40	621.60	+ 5.80	2.50
UK Growth Inc	369.40	392.90	+ 3.70	2.50
Higher Inc Acc #	1076.00	1144.00	+ 7.00	4.77
Higher Inc Inc #	552.70	587.90	+ 3.80	4.77
Gilt/Fxd Int Acc	232.80	245.90	- 0.10	5.60
Gilt/Fxd Int Inc	96.94	102.40		5.60
Nth America	415.60	442.10	+ 1.40	
Europe	446.20	474.60	- 3.60	0.59
Brit Excell	116.00	123.40	+ 0.90	2.36
Brit Fndmtls Acc	146.00	156.30		4.48
Brit Fndmtls Inc	93.70	99.68	- 0.01	4.48
Global Opps	109.00	115.90	- 0.40	0.30
Balanced Acc	72.87	77.52	+ 0.35	2.38
Balanced Inc	66.67	70.92	+ 0.32	2.38
Japan Acc	33.43	35.56	+ 0.30	
Pac Basin Acc	274.10	291.50	- 1.60	2.39
ABBEY UNIT TST MGRS				
0345 717 373				
Gilt & Fixed Int	143.00	151.70†	+ 0.20	5.89
High Inc Equity	223.30	237.80	+ 1.90	4.21
Worldwide Bond	274.70	291.30†	+ 1.40	3.44
American Growth	524.70	559.90	+ 5.10	0.30
Asian Pacific	214.00	228.90	- 2.30	0.49
Assets & Earnings	341.50	365.20†	+ 2.70	2.80
Euro Cap&Inc Acc	241.90	258.70	+ 3.30	0.77
Extra Inc	42.41	45.12†	- 0.20	9.22
General	317.20	337.40	+ 2.40	2.91
Global Opps	75.16	79.96	- 0.66	0.40
Japan	72.38	77.41	+ 0.84	
Managed Inc	52.10	55.43†	+ 0.14	4.06
Multitrust	183.00	195.70	+ 1.30	1.13
US Emerging Cos	212.90	227.70	- 0.70	
Ethical	89.59	95.31	- 0.05	1.92
International	138.60	147.40	+ 1.30	0.59
Dividend & Growth	82.25	87.50	+ 0.65	3.99
Global Gwth & Sec	78.09	83.37	+ 0.15	3.42
Latin America	79.07	85.05	+ 1.80	0.87
Capital Reserve	153.70	153.80	- 0.10	4.54
ABBEY NATIONAL UNIT TRUST MGRS LTD				
0141 275 9500				

	Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld %
COIF CHARITY FUNDS				
0171 588 1815				
Investment Inc	914.45	928.27	+20.88	3.75
Investment Acc	4304.54	4460.88	+99.39	
Fixed Int Inc	133.88	134.20		8.64
Fixed Int Acc	267.13	268.21	- 1.62	8.59
CITY FINANCIAL UT MGRS LTD				
0171 556 8800				
Beckman Inc	97.02	102.02		6.06
Beck Bio-Tech	40.81	43.19†		
Acorn Ethical Tst	214.05	227.21†	...	0.54
City Fin Assets	88.24	90.56	..	2.93
City Fin Intl	86.53	92.05†		0.06
Frmrs Hse Cap	366.08	389.45	...	1.61
Beckley Wrld Grth	143.48	152.09		
Shaw Utilities	84.28	85.81†	+ 0.07	3.49
CITY OF LONDON UNIT TST MGRS LTD				
0171 711 0771 Admin: 01277 227 300				
Emerging Markets	47.83	50.85	+ 0.07	...
CLERICAL MEDICAL UT MGRS LTD				
0345 772 293				
American Grwth	98.04	104.30	+ 0.89	
Dragon Growth	45.46	48.82	- 0.37	1.69
Equity High Inc	115.15	121.85†	+ 1.65	3.09
-do- Accum	173.81	183.92	+ 1.59	3.08
Extra Income Inc	29.01	30.53		6.03
Extra Income Acc	33.72	35.49		6.03
European Grwth	80.89	85.59	+ 0.44	0.14
Evergreen	35.68	37.51	+ 0.18	
General Equity	133.58	140.96	+ 1.02	2.23
Japan Growth	32.14	34.19	+ 0.35	
Pedigree Grwth	81.01	85.72	+ 0.71	1.43
Pref Sm Cos Inc	41.56	43.98	- 0.22	1.36
-do- Accum	44.75	47.35	- 0.24	1.36
Retirement Inc #	34.14	36.32	+ 0.27	4.91
Special Sits	54.83	58.96	+ 0.10	2.37
UK & Overseas	66.26	70.11	+ 0.44	0.57
COLONIAL UNIT TRUSTS (UK) LTD				
01634 898 000				
Balanced	81.29	84.78	+ 0.85	3.53
Capital	99.96	104.14	+ 0.47	1.91
High Income	56.69	59.05†	+ 0.12	6.38
Top 50	73.67	78.73	+ 0.66	1.80
COMMERCIAL UNION TRUST MGRS LTD				
0161 686 9818				
PRESTIGE PORTFOLIO (PPT FUNDS)				
Income Funds				
Equity Inc	230.48	240.11	+ 1.96	4.22
Long Gilt	50.93	53.02	- 0.18	4.87
Monthly Inc Plus	59.13	61.60	- 0.58	7.27
Preference Share	57.19	59.58	+ 0.87	6.54
Balanced Funds				
High Yield	166.24	173.18	+ 1.59	5.43
Managed Fund	84.74	88.28	+ 0.46	2.40
UK Growth Funds				
Smaller Cos	51.69	53.86	+ 0.04	1.58
-do- Accum	61.82	64.40	+ 0.05	1.58
UK & General	123.12	128.26	+ 1.04	2.11
-do- Accum	164.99	171.88	+ 1.38	2.11
UK Growth	245.39	255.64	+ 1.85	1.54
International Growth Funds				
Europe Growth	267.75	278.94	+ 2.13	0.48
Far Eastern Grth	93.82	97.74	+ 0.06	0.29
Global Bond	72.77	75.81	+ 0.16	5.06
Japan Growth	84.59	88.12	+ 0.40	
North Amer Grth	308.39	321.27	- 2.90	
Oriental Growth	56.18	58.53	- 0.26	0.84
Worldwide Growth	80.16	83.51	+ 0.57	0.31
OTHER CU TRUSTS (NON PPT FUNDS)				
Deposit Fund	92.46	92.46	- 0.01	6.79
Homemaker Fund	101.02	107.46	+ 1.02	2.01
Quilter Fund	174.15	185.27	+ 1.32	1.71
CONSISTENT UNIT TST MGMT CO LTD				

	Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld %
Inc Port Inc	75.44	79.78†	+ 0.44	3.42
Inc Port Acc	86.99	91.99†	+ 0.51	3.29
Wwide Port	61.71	65.26	+ 0.41	
LEGAL & GENERAL (UT MGRS) LTD				
Enquiries: 01222 448412 Dealing: 01222 883512				
Equity Dist @	738.30	738.30	+ 7.00	2.00
-do- Accum @	1561.00	1561.00	+15.00	2.00
Equity Income #	126.30	126.30	+ 2.89	4.52
UK Tactical Allocn @	84.57	84.57†	+ 0.85	5.11
European @	179.10	179.10	+ 0.88	0.15
Far Eastern @	155.10	155.10	- 0.20	
Fixed Interest @	58.79	58.79†	- 0.07	7.28
Gilt @	98.82	98.82†	- 0.09	5.94
Global Growth @	82.19	82.19	+ 0.49	0.41
Intl Bond @	49.60	49.60	+ 0.11	4.99
Japanese @	52.83	52.83†	+ 0.31	..
North American @	291.60	291.60	+ 3.90	
Pacific Growth @	77.32	77.32	- 0.34	0.88
Pacific Index @	31.14	31.14†	- 0.25	3.34
UK Index @	96.09	96.09†	+ 0.83	2.55
UK Recovery @	137.80	137.80†	+ 0.90	1.44
UK Smaller Cos @	180.20	180.20	- 0.40	1.18
US Index @	113.80	113.80†	+ 1.60	0.69
European Index @	114.50	114.50	+ 0.69	1.00
Japan Index @	25.53	25.53	+ 0.25	
Worldwide @	111.20	111.20†	+ 0.70	1.11
LINCOLN UNIT TRUST MGRS				
01452 371 500 Dealing: 01452 371 633				

	Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld %
MERCURY FUND MANAGERS LTD				
Dealing: 0800 445522				
American	363.90	383.50†	+4.400	
-do- Accum	389.10	410.10†	+4.700	
American Opps	142.70	151.70	+0.900	
-do- Accum	144.50	153.60	+0.800	
British Blue Chip	122.40	129.80	+1.300	2.54
-do- Accum	162.30	172.30	+1.900	2.54
Cash	100.90	100.90		6.84
-do- Accum *	155.90	155.90	+0.100	6.84
Emerging Mkts	126.80	138.30	+0.400	0.23
-do- Accum	128.60	138.30	+0.300	0.23
European Growth	404.40	428.10	+2.800	0.12
-do- Accum	441.40	467.40	+3.100	0.12
European Income	100.10	105.90		3.83
-do- Accum	150.70	159.60		3.83
General	715.40	760.70	+6.700	2.11
-do- Accum	1492.00	1586.00	+14.00	2.11
Global Bond	128.70	135.20	+0.400	4.72
-do- Accum	179.10	188.20	+0.800	4.72
Gold & General	106.80	113.80	+1.500	0.63
-do- Accum	109.70	117.80	+1.700	0.63
Govt Securities	108.50	103.80†	+0.100	5.28
-do- Accum	226.40	233.50†	+0.400	5.25
High Yield Bd	109.40	112.10†	+0.100	6.00
-do- Accum	124.30	127.40†	+0.100	6.00
Income	237.00	251.80†	+2.300	3.58
-do- Accum	409.50	434.90†	+3.800	3.58
Inc Portfolio #	129.80	137.30	+1.000	4.75
-do- Accum #	147.70	158.40	+1.000	4.75

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Equities continue to climb

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ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES

1997 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
584	407½	Allied Domecq‡	541	+ 6	4.6	13.8
628	382½	Bulmer (HP)	387½	...	4.8	11.9
75½	40½	Burn Stewart	45	...	9.4	10.7
1040	866	Glenmorangie A	922½	− 27½	1.8	22.0
698	425½	Grand Met	588	+ 8	3.2	19.0
630½	424	Guinness	591½	+ 5½	3.3	16.3
380	280	Highland Distill	301½	...	3.7	13.9
336	181½	Matthew Clark	185	+ 1½	13.0	5.8
100½	49½	Merrydown W	64½	+ 2	6.8	...
2000½	1368½	SA Breweries†	1482½	+ 6½	2.5	...

BANKS

1997 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
1521½	916½	ABN-AMRO	1238½	− 12½	2.6	17.5
1149	710	Abbey Natl	1142	+ 80	3.0	18.8
855	582½	Alliance & Leic	831	+ 37½	2.5	18.5
808	388½	Allied Irish	787	...	3.0	17.3
516½	283½	Aus New Z	385	− 3½	5.2	...
4553½	2875	Bank America‡	4768½	+ 95½	...	...
595	291½	Bank Scotland	584	+ 27	1.9	18.2
1800	929½	Barclays	1750	+ 35	2.4	18.6
924½	517½	Bk of Ireland	924½	...	2.3	20.3
8959½	6095½	Citicorp	8975	+ 218½	...	...
1753½	1268½	Commerzbk	1682½	− 18½	2.8	...
862½	403½	Dai Ichi Kan Y	446½	...	0.9	...
4598½	2709½	Deutsche Bk	4233½	+ 37½	1.5	...
1300	758½	Espirito Santo	1103½	...	3.1	...
947½	249	Fuji Bank Y	280½	+ ½	1.4	54.3
2369½	1272½	HSBC	1578	− 7	3.6	12.8
2258½	1226	HSBC HK	1590	− 3	3.8	12.2
783	507	Halifax	770	+ 24½	2.4	25.9
645	483½	Irish Perm	640	...	2.4	17.7
880½	424	Lloyds TSB	778	+ 11	2.3	22.6
1009	680½	Nat Aust Bk	894½	+ 15½	4.8	...
1060	689½	Nat West	1045	+ 45	3.6	18.5
569½	440	Northern Rock	359½	− 4½	2.0	22.1
780	508	Royal Bk Scot	762	+ 4	3.5	14.9
1089½	592½	Stand Chart	690	− 9	2.8	12.0
2184½	£1364½	Wells Fargo	£164½	...	1.9	...
403½	315½	Westpac	375	+ 3½	3.3	...
373½	247½	Woolwich	321½	+ ½	3.1	18.0

BREWERIES, PUBS & REST

1997 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
965	685	Bass‡	899	+ 4	3.8	18.2
68½	43½	Bdh for the Bdr	54	...	4.2	11.4
205	132½	Burtonwood Brw	159½	...	3.8	13.3
155½	127½	City Centre Rest	139½	+ ½	2.3	28.7
762½	575½	Compass Gp	762½	+ 14½	1.6	25.3
305	250	Eldridge P 'A'	280½	− ½	2.7	...
269½	221	Enterprise Inns†	244	...	3.8	...
485	412	Fuller Sm 'A'†	427½	...	3.1	13.8
598	380	Greenalls Gp	422½	+ 14	5.1	18.3
770	610	Greene King†	760	− ½	3.8	14.3
237½	152½	Groupe Chez Ger	197½	...	4.0	20.6
298½	218½	Groupe Chez Ger	281½	...	1.4	22.7
298½	213½	Hardy Hanson	225	...	6.5	...
2850	2075	Hall J	2725	...	3.5	11.9

DISTRIBUTORS

1997 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
680	530	Brammer	580	+ 1	3.5	14.0
27	12½	Bridgend Grp	12½	− ½	2.9	57.3
119½	84½	[illegible]	95	...	7.8	7.8
360	309	Caffyns	342	− 1½	4.8	7.9
225	162½	Car Group	189½	+ 1	3.1	...
172½	117½	[illegible]	130½	...	3.8	7.8
180	81½	Charles Sidney	82½	...	4.5	12.5
58½	42	Cook (DC)	49½	...	8.8	5.8
121	90½	Dagenham Motors	90	...	10.1	6.4

DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS

1997 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
492½	327½	Antofagasta	337½	...	1.8	32.3
328	232	Ascot Hldgs	254	...	2.6	71.1
917	580	Broken Hill	515½	+ 6½	3.8	14.1
289	174	BTR	181	...	6.1	6.3
624	462	BAT	564½	+ 16½	3.8	13.9
60½	41	Bilsdey Inv	41½	− 1	11.5	8.7
265	182	Cookson	186½	− 4	5.3	11.9

OTHER FINANCIAL

1997 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
635	522½	Secure Tst	635		4.3	13.2
162½	127½	Singer & Fried	141½	..	4.3	11.3
54½	29½	Towry Law	51	+ ½	-	-
4½	1½	Trio Hldgs	4½	− ¼		
106½	65	[illegible]	60	− ½		
64	20½	Versailles Gp	47½	...	1.1	28.7
402½	310	Wintrust	400	..	4.5	16.0

PHARMACEUTICALS

1997 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
285	95	Brit Biotech	100½	− 1	..	..
1115	618	Cantab Pharms	620			
673	247½	Celltech	290			
443½	225½	Chiroscience	243½	+ 1	..	..
192	107½	Cortecs	107½	− 1½		...
1477½	865½	Glaxo Well	1449	+ 27	2.9	29.8
245	91	ML Laboratories	92½	− 19		
330½	186	Medeva	186	− 3	3.1	34.8
408	228½	Peptide Thera	273	..		
202½	177½	Powderject	194½	...	...	...
92	24½	Proteus Intl	47	− 1		
84	56	Ransom (Wm)	73		4.3	15.1
737½	262½	Scotia	265	− 2½		
287½	218	Shire Pharmc	282½	+ 4	...	
95	45	SkyePharma	53½	− ½		
662	384½	SmithKline Beecham	661	+ 23	1.6	32.4
392	180	Therap Anti Inc	227½			
707½	367½	Vanguard	418½	+ 7		
435	166½	Xenova	175			
2291	1585½	Zeneca	2020	+ 45	2.2	27.0

PRINTING & PAPER

1997 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
142	86	AG Holdings†	87		9.0	11.3
782	370	API	570	− 10	2.7	..
77½	47½	App Holo	75	− 1½		
208	151	Arjo Wiggins	162½	− 1½	5.3	11.8
24	17½	Bath Press	21½	...	3.2	8.9
450½	369½	Bemrose	432½		4.5	12.5
229½	130	Blagden	162½	+ 1	2.0	10.6
3490½	2178½	Bowater Inc	3540½	+ 16½	..	
326½	248½	[illegible]	258½		1.5	17.7
745	430½	Br Polythene	430½	− 3½	5.4	10.2
24½	10½	Br Thornton	17½			
148	49	Britton Grp	138½	..	2.1	15.6
276½	188	Bunzl	230	+ ½	3.2	14.1
237½	125	Capital Inds	135		5.4	11.1
388½	256½	Cropper (James)†	261½		2.3	9.4
673½	303	De La Rue	410	+ 2½	7.3	10.7
267½	195½	Dolphin Pack	256		3.7	14.8
75½	35½	[illegible] Group	38		13.2	11.7
238	117	Ferguson Intl	135		12.3	10.2
165½	120½	Filofax	149½		3.3	10.3
134	62½	Inveresk	74½		8.7	7.8

RETAILERS, GENERAL

1997 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
147½	85	Partwest†	85		0.7	15.7
90½	67½	Partridge Fine	89½		4.5	16.1
40½	25	QS Hldgs	29½	...	...	...
337½	256½	[illegible]	315		3.5	16.6
142½	50½	Sale Group	91	− 2½	9.8	6.8
85½	48½	Sears	50	+ ½	9.3	38.0
35½	26½	Signet Group	29½	− ¼	..	0.5
484½	323½	Smith WH	384	..	5.1	
1220	910	Sothebys	1085		2.3	..
305½	184	Storehouse†	245½	+ 4½	4.3	12.4
150	77	Stylo	87½		8.7	
262½	152½	T & S Stores	191½	...	5.2	10.7
288½	135	Thorn	157	+ 5½	10.8	8.4
203½	123½	Tie Rack‡	129½		3.2	13.1
340	265½	UNO	278		2.0	20.6
4	2½	Upton & South	3½	...		16.3
543½	324½	Vendome†	466½	− ½	2.8	17.4
417½	132½	Wickes	254	+ 14½		5.0
313½	232½	Wyevale	275½	...	3.0	18.3

SUPPORT SERVICES

1997 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
525	386	AEA Tech	503½	+ 1½	2.2	23.8
180½	142	Aggreko	152	− 1	2.9	21.9
114	72	Alpha Airpt	79	− ½	8.4	7.5
56	34½	Alphameric	51½	− ½	..	25.1
58	29½	[illegible] Gp	45½	− 5½		...
387½	254	Atkins WS	360½	+ 1	2.6	21.1
189½	112½	BNB Res	154		6.2	8.1
502½	394½	BPP	500		3.5	19.7
797½	416	BTG	680	+ 2	0.2	
95½	69½	Brooks Service	80½		5.6	11.9
575	432	Business Post	550		2.5	24.1
1527½	840	CMG	1480	+ 5	0.5	47.4
367½	220½	CRT Gp†	360	...	1.5	50.1
890	590	Caird Gp	827½		1.5	8.1
341	161½	Capita Group	340	+ 6½	0.7	62.8
9	6	Chemex	8½	+ ¼	2.2	16.1
250	172½	Corp Services	216	− ½	3.3	17.6
58½	26½	Coutts Consltg	31		6.2	
346	217½	DCS Gp	309½	− 1	0.7	24.4
780	216½	Danka Bs Syst	217½	− 292½	1.8	8.0
313	232½	Davis Service	312	...	4.3	18.0
910	655	Delphi	892½	...	1.2	19.1
615	280	Diagonal	615	+ 15	0.2	60.9
270	170	Dudley Jenkins	270		2.2	22.1
79½	37	EW Fact	62	− ½	4.0	10.8
180	49	El Data Prc	52½		5.4	
847½	470	FI Group	832½	..	0.8	59.3
325	175	Harvey Nash	323	+ 6½	1.5	
850	515	Hays	805	+ 1	1.4	32.3
313½	194½	Hogg Robinson†	245½		5.2	11.4
1058	530	JBA Hldgs†	1051½		0.6	52.1
295	207	Johnson Clean	227½	+ 2	6.5	9.0
114½	56	Kalamazoo	69½		7.6	10.1
647	521½	Kewill Syst	567½	...	2.2	13.6
37½	15½	Laser-Scan	18			
353½	153½	Lavendon	352½	+ 2	1.2	28.0
1087½	671	Logica	1086½	+ 26½	1.4	34.9

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1997 High	Low	Stock	Price £	+/-	Int yld %	Gross red yld
SHORTS (under 5 years)						
116[illegible]	113[illegible]	Treas [illegible]% 1998	116[illegible]	...	3.99	6.67
103[illegible]	100[illegible]	Exch 9¾% 1998	100[illegible]	− [illegible]	9.73	7.23
101[illegible]	100	Treas 7¼% 1998	100[illegible]	+ [illegible]	7.25	7.21
110[illegible]	102[illegible]	Treas 14% 1998-01	102[illegible]	− [illegible]	13.62	7.31
114[illegible]	106[illegible]	Treas 15½% 1998	106[illegible]	..	14.80	7.23
109[illegible]	104[illegible]	Exch 12% 1998	104[illegible]	...	11.51	7.16
105[illegible]	102[illegible]	Treas 9½% 1999	102[illegible]	...	9.20	7.07
111[illegible]	106[illegible]	Exch 12¼% 1999	106[illegible]	...	11.53	7.02
108[illegible]	104[illegible]	Treas 10½% 1999	104[illegible]	+ [illegible]	10.03	6.95
99[illegible]	98[illegible]	Treas 6% 1999	98[illegible]	+ [illegible]	6.08	6.81
109[illegible]	105[illegible]	Conv 10¼% 1999	105[illegible]	+ [illegible]	9.67	6.89
106[illegible]	103[illegible]	Conv 9% 2000	104[illegible]	+ [illegible]	8.62	6.81
104[illegible]	102[illegible]	Treas 8% 2000	103[illegible]	+ [illegible]	7.74	6.71
104[illegible]	102[illegible]	Treas 8½% 2000	103[illegible]	+ [illegible]	8.24	6.80
119[illegible]	113[illegible]	Treas 13% 2000	114[illegible]	...	11.38	6.85
112[illegible]	98[illegible]	Treas 10% 2001	109[illegible]	+ [illegible]	9.17	6.76
101[illegible]	98[illegible]	Treas 7% 2001	101[illegible]	+ [illegible]	6.91	6.61
MEDIUMS (5 to 15 years)						
102[illegible]	97[illegible]	Treas 7% 2002	101[illegible]	+ [illegible]	6.87	6.52
122[illegible]	105[illegible]	Treas 9¾% 2002	112[illegible]	+ [illegible]	8.67	6.59
107[illegible]	102[illegible]	Treas 8% 2003	106[illegible]	...	7.49	6.47
117[illegible]	111[illegible]	Treas 10% 2003	116[illegible]	...	8.59	6.49
116[illegible]	112[illegible]	Treas 11½% 2001-04	113[illegible]	...	10.12	6.76
90[illegible]	82[illegible]	Fund 3½% 1999-04	90[illegible]	+ [illegible]	3.88	5.26
118[illegible]	109[illegible]	Conv 9½% 2004	116[illegible]	− [illegible]	8.14	6.44
102[illegible]	94[illegible]	Treas 6¾% 2004	101[illegible]	..	6.62	6.40
114[illegible]	104[illegible]	Treas 8½% 2005	113[illegible]	− [illegible]	7.52	6.37
122[illegible]	110[illegible]	Conv 9½% 2005	117[illegible]	− [illegible]	8.07	6.37
130[illegible]	124[illegible]	Treas 12½% 2003-05	129	+ [illegible]	9.69	6.62
108[illegible]	98[illegible]	Treas 7½% 2006	107[illegible]	− [illegible]	6.98	6.34
110[illegible]	99[illegible]	Treas 7¾% 2006	108[illegible]	− [illegible]	7.18	6.37
105[illegible]	100[illegible]	Treas 8% 2002-06	105[illegible]	+ [illegible]	7.58	6.62
123[illegible]	115[illegible]	Treas 11¾% 2003-07	122[illegible]	+ [illegible]	9.63	6.52
118[illegible]	105[illegible]	Treas 8½% 2007	115[illegible]	− [illegible]	7.38	6.36
107[illegible]	98[illegible]	Treas 7¼% 2007	107[illegible]	− [illegible]	6.77	6.28
121[illegible]	108[illegible]	Treas 9% 2008	121[illegible]	− [illegible]	7.41	6.25
114[illegible]	101	Treas 8% 2009	114[illegible]	− [illegible]	7.01	6.28
99[illegible]	86[illegible]	Treas 6¼% 2010	98[illegible]	− [illegible]	6.29	6.31
124[illegible]	109[illegible]	Conv 9% 2011	124[illegible]	− [illegible]	7.25	6.32
125[illegible]	109[illegible]	Treas 9% 2012	125[illegible] †	− [illegible]	7.19	6.33
99[illegible]	88[illegible]	Treas 5½% 2008-12	98[illegible]	− [illegible]	5.80	6.21
113	98[illegible]	Treas 7¾% 2012-15	112[illegible]	− [illegible]	6.88	6.40
LONGS (over 15 years)						
116[illegible]	100[illegible]	Treas 8% 2013	116[illegible]	− [illegible]	6.87	6.33
118[illegible]	101[illegible]	Treas 8% 2015	118[illegible]	− [illegible]	6.78	6.28
127[illegible]	103[illegible]	Treas 8¾% 2017	127[illegible]	− [illegible]	6.88	6.31
122[illegible]	101[illegible]	Tr 8% 2021	121[illegible]	− [illegible]	6.59	6.25
UNDATED						
55[illegible]	43[illegible]	War Ln 3½%	55[illegible]	− [illegible]	6.34	
38[illegible]	30[illegible]	Treas 2½%	38[illegible]	− [illegible]	6.48	
61[illegible]	49[illegible]	Consols 4%	60[illegible]	− [illegible]	6.61	...
INDEX-LINKED on projected inflation of:					5%	3%
194[illegible]	184[illegible]	Treas IL 2½% 2001	194[illegible]	− [illegible]	2.95	3.28
192[illegible]	180[illegible]	Treas IL 2½% 2003	192[illegible]	− [illegible]	2.95	3.18
124[illegible]	117[illegible]	Treas IL 4⅝% 2004	124[illegible]	− [illegible]	2.93	3.12
206[illegible]	190	Treas IL 2% 2006	206[illegible]	− [illegible]	2.96	3.11
188[illegible]	170[illegible]	Treas IL 2½% 2009	188[illegible]	− [illegible]	2.94	3.08
197[illegible]	176[illegible]	Treas IL 2½% 2011	197[illegible]	− [illegible]	2.95	3.05
164[illegible]	144[illegible]	Treas IL 2½% 2013	164[illegible]	− [illegible]	2.95	3.04
177[illegible]	153[illegible]	Treas IL 2½% 2016	177[illegible]	− [illegible]	2.98	3.04
172[illegible]	147[illegible]	Treas IL 2½% 2020	172[illegible]	− [illegible]	2.98	3.04
145[illegible]	122[illegible]	Treas IL 2½% 2024	144[illegible]	− [illegible]	2.97	3.05
142[illegible]	118[illegible]	Treas IL 4⅛% 2030	142[illegible]	− [illegible]	2.96	3.02

ALTERNATIVE INV MARKET

1997 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
306	84½	Abacus Recruit	195	− 10	1.0	22.5
217	178	City Inns▼	207½		1.8	15.8
262½	180	Dawson Hldgs	220	..	2.7	21.2
51½	26½	Freepages	28½	...	..	...
99½	64½	Megalomedia	65	− 1	0.4	38.9
65	22½	Memory Corp	25	− ½		
580	288	Prism Rail	385	− 1	1.8	...
1265	732½	Rangers Ftr	870	..	0.1	...
783	619½	Southern News	738	...	3.4	19.6
84½	65½	Southern Vectis	84½	..	3.1	17.6
60½	17	Trocadero†	18	+ ½	...	...

Source: FT Information

Price at suspension. † Ex dividend; ‡ Ex scrip; ▲ Ex rights issue; ▼ Ex all; § Ex capital distribution; * Figures at report awaited. . No significant data. Companies in bold are constituents of the FTSE 100 Index.

Hot spots on the jazz shelf

Clive Davis picks the best of the year's jazz books

Since this is the time of year for the crystal ball, I confidently predict that osteopaths will see an increase in shoulder strains among jazz lovers. The reason? Many of them will have spent several weeks grappling with the thousand-plus pages of Robert Gottlieb's monumental anthology. **Reading Jazz** (Bloomsbury, £20).

Gottlieb, who was at the helm of *The New Yorker* in the era BT (Before Tina), may not seem the obvious choice for a collection of this kind. But he perhaps benefits from a degree of objectivity lacking in those who have fought and refought so many of the jazz world's civil wars.

The collection is divided into autobiography, reportage and criticism. It is only proper that the opening pages should be reserved for Jelly Roll Morton who, with the help of folklorist Alan Lomax, produced one of the most vivid of American autobiographies.

The bleak underside is never far away. Gottlieb has dipped into Art Pepper's searing memoir *Straight Life*, Hampton Hawes's *Raise Up Off Me* and Anita O'Day's equally candid account of drug addiction in *High Times, Hard Times*.

So many record dates, so much carousing can dull the reader's senses after a while. Gottlieb perhaps fails to sustain as measured a balance between the serious and the humorous as Bill Crow managed in his garrulous pot pourri. *Jazz Anecdotes*, published by Oxford in 1990.

Still, the two latter sections are a delight. Gene Lees can always be relied upon to give a perceptive insider's view. And Gottlieb makes space for our own Max Harrison, Humphrey Lyttelton and Benny Green. The latter's essay on Bix Beiderbecke is taken from his book *The Reluctant Art*, the pithiest overview of jazz history I have ever come across.

Finally, it is good to see that Gottlieb does not shy away from introducing dissident voices. Philip Larkin's choleric introduction to *All What Jazz* remains a classic denunciation of Modernism in all its areas of the arts.

Musicians themselves, I suspect, will turn first of all to the very last contribution — producer Orrin Keepnew's stinging attack on critics.

Two titles compete for the coffee-table market this Christmas. Mervyn Cooke, a music lecturer at Nottingham University, takes a painstaking month-by-month approach in **The Chronicle of Jazz** (Thames and Hudson, £24.95). More rigorous editing might have helped, but the book contains many evocative illustrations and incisive capsule accounts of trends.

Roy Carr's **A Century of Jazz** (Hamlyn, £25) covers the same ground rather more stylishly. Assembled by a forceful team of writers, it condenses the journey from New Orleans to Acid Jazz into a series of pungent essays, adding unexpected detours into such esoterica as cowboy Bob Wills's western swing.

Carr and his colleagues sensibly refrain from making sweeping assertions about the future. In the introduction to **Singing Jazz: The Singers and Their Styles** (Blandford, £14.99), Bruce Crowther and Mike Pinfold recall that when they published a previous study of the vocalist's art a decade ago they found themselves agreeing with Betty Carter's melancholy comment: "After me, there are no more jazz singers."

They could not have been more wrong. In fact the generation of singers who have emerged since then tend to display more individuality than the highly publicised instrumentalists. *Singing Jazz* picks a thoughtful path through past and present.

Crowther and Pinfold do not gloss over the problems — not least the dearth of worthwhile new material. The malaise is evoked by that witty singer-songwriter Dave Frishberg, composer of the Cole Porterish *Peel Me A Grape*.

"It doesn't seem plausible to me that the American popular song could have evolved from Victor Herbert through Jerome Kern through Irving Berlin through George Gershwin through Cole Porter through Johnny Mercer through Harold Arlen through Frank Loesser through Alan Jay Lerner, and wind up with Neil Diamond!"

Then and now: Bruce Forsyth and Anthea Redfern gave us *The Generation Game* for Christmas Day 1971; Julian Clary and the "pretty policemen" are on BBC2 this Sunday

Haunted by ghost of Christmas past

Tis the season to watch telly, but as **W. Stephen Gilbert** discovers, our Yuletide tastes have changed dramatically in the past 25 years

Gather round the Aga, children, and I will tell you a Christmas story. Long, long ago, the BBC beheld that the family habitually gathered round the box to celebrate Christmas. And it saw that this was good, or at least good for festooning the BBC itself with fairy lights that might shine encouragingly on the latest application for an increase in the price of the licence. And lo, the Corporation created the Christmas special, a sort of extended (or distended) edition of a popular programme and, along with its store of movie premieres, it put them all in a package and called it the Christmas schedule.

Seeing the BBC's star rise and knowing that the advertisers are comparatively uninterested in Christmas because the spending rush is over by then, the wise men of ITV (in those far off days the BBC's only rivals) quoth, in their strange Old Testament fashion, "stuff this for a lark". And they took rather less trouble over their Christmas schedule than did the BBC. And that, children, is why the BBC spends the days between Christmas and January trumpeting its ratings.

This Christmas, for reasons complex, the schedules want for a little generosity. Repeats are the order of the day and however you package them — compilations of clips linked by a "personality" talking to the camera and supported by a studio audience; theme nights pulling together programmes and movies from many sources — they are still not new-minted. The BBC is re-running a number of seasonal special editions of sitcoms first shown in the mid-1970s — *The Likely Lads, Steptoe and Son, Sykes, Are You Being Served?* — and, with the first two originating in 1974, it seemed instructively serendipitous to compare the Christmas fortnight's programming of that year with this.

First things first. In terrestrial transmission alone, there is today three times as much television as there was a quarter-century ago. Channels 4 and 5 are in play and all but the BBC (News 24 aside) transmit round the clock. Yet the most striking contrast between the schedules is the decline of programming related to the conventional focus of the festivities, that is to say to anything specifically religious. Typically of the era, there were 11 church services on television in the 1974 holiday fortnight and the full count of devotional programmes was 31, of which more than half were on ITV. This year there are six services and another ten items of a religious thrust, ITV's contribution numbering just five, C4 being entirely secular.

Another feature in retreat is what we might call "proper" music. Christmas 1974 mustered 15 concerts, relays of opera and ballet performances and even in-house productions, including BBC1's *The Yeoman of the Guard* in peak time on New Year's Day and Granada's *Trial By Jury* on Christmas Eve. ITV also carried two concerts in its Sunday tea-time *Aquarius* slot and (unthinkable now) a specially arranged classical concert on Christmas night. BBC1 had its own concert on Christmas Eve and a big gala from Sadler's Wells three nights later.

Fast forward to today and Gilbert and Sullivan are notably absent. Indeed, with the exception of the Royal Ballet School's *Peter and the Wolf* to keep children occupied while the turkey is carved, BBC1 has no music to offer; ITV has none at all. The music-lover must resort to the other channels where, with the exceptions of C4's recording of English National Opera's *The Damnation of Faust* on Christmas night and BBC2's Boxing Day showcase for the Royal Ballet, all musical items are banished out of peak time.

Television styles wax and wane with the years. In the 1970s, sitcoms and games shows were at their peak and variety was still popular, so the seasonal editions of these forms proliferated. *Bruce Forsyth and the Generation Game* was BBC1's banker and no fewer than three editions went out around Christmas. Dick Emery, Les Dawson, Tommy Cooper, David Nixon, Mike Yarwood, Norman Wisdom, Ken Dodd, Petula Clark, Shirley Bassey, Cilla Black, Val Doonican, Basil Brush, Sooty . . . all these and more had Yule draped around them. The Christmas specials best remembered from these years were those of Morecambe and Wise but as luck would have it the boys skipped 1974, instead entrusting Michael Parkinson to front a bunch of clips from their previous Christmas shows. Such repackaging was then a novelty.

Contemporary television has fewer such stars or such games. *The Generation Game*, now the creature of Jim Davidson, enjoys a single seasonal run-out as does Forsyth's newer vehicle *The Price is Right*. Freddie Starr, Brian Conley and Dame Edna Everage get the puttin'-on-a-show accolade but vehicles for modern stars are much less stage-derived than those of their predecessors and draw much more on the kind of packaging that TV has made its own. *Harry Enfield and Christmas Chums, Jack Dee's Sunday Service* and *The Mrs Merton Christmas Show* are well-tried formats with a sprig of holly in one corner, rather than the push-the-boat-out variety bills of heretofore.

Still, if anyone can be dubbed old Brucie's successor as a BBC icon for all seasons, it could just be Julian Clary whose blissfully tacky *All Rise For . . .* goes out on two successive nights, admittedly on BBC2 where, if they bump into it by mistake, your in-laws can be persuaded to blame themselves for straying into exotic lands. The Spice Girls, meanwhile, may be losing their savour even as I write but Christmas schedulers hope that the flavour will linger at least until the tree is undressed, and so offer three bites at this particular cherry. *Spice Up Your Christmas* is the perhaps imploring title of ITV's version.

The Oscar Wilde anniversary has spurred a new dramatisation of his story *The Canterville Ghost* with Ian Richardson and Donald Sinden. Oddly enough, 1974 had its own version (David Niven and Flora Robson among the cast). But the Christmas ghost story tradition has faded. A generation ago, M.R. James was the favoured source for a drama to unsettle satisfyingly. The BBC, still uncertain of the role of costume dramatisation in 1990s television, has gone back to Wilkie Collins for a two-parter this time.

Other stalwarts no longer serve at all. Ever since the 1940s there was always a circus for cameras to relay to excited children viewing over Christmas — Billy Smart's, Chipperfield's and Ringling Brothers, Barnum and Bailey in 1974 — but this year there is only the circus movie, *The Greatest Show on Earth*, part of a Jimmy Stewart season. The ice show and the magic show have gone the same way.

There is generally much less drama and, within that, much less seasonal drama than in previous times, but many dozens more movies nowadays, including more recent roadshow features. In 1974 peak-time movies on Christmas Day featured John Wayne — in *True Grit* on BBC1, in *The Undefeated* on ITV. This year's equivalents, *The Mask* and *Home Alone 2*, may be no nearer to great art than the Wayne pair, but somehow they seem rather closer to the notion of Christmas which the schedulers have evolved — a secular family gathering at which the kids wield the remote control.

BRIEFLY NOTED

Beijing first

OPERA: After *Aida* at the Pyramids, here comes *Turandot* in the Forbidden City of Beijing. Eight open-air performances of Puccini's "Chinese" masterpiece will take place next September in the square in front of Beijing's 18th-century palace. The £10 million production, based on one staged this year at the Maggio Musicale in Florence, is by the top Chinese film director Zhang Yimou and is conducted by Zubin Mehta. Around 350 performers from Florence will take part, along with 600 local performers and technicians. Booking and further information on http://www.turandot-on-site.com.

THEATRE: Another screen success is to be transferred to the stage. *Brassed Off*, the heartwarming British film about a colliery brass band that decides to play on after the closure of its pit, will be staged at the Crucible in Sheffield next March. Mark Herman's screenplay will be adapted for the theatre by Paul Allen, and a real brass band will be playing for the shows.

DANCE: A Japanese ballerina who has spent the past two decades as a principal dancer with Scottish Ballet has been awarded an honorary OBE by Donald Dewar, the Scottish Secretary, on behalf of the Queen. Noriko Ohara, who joined Scottish Ballet in 1976, was amazed by the honour: "I never dreamt I would receive such an award. I deeply appreciate Scotland's acceptance of my work — and of me."

MUSIC: Does the "man with the golden flute" also have a golden baton? The London Mozart Players will soon find out: James Galway has been appointed as the orchestra's principal guest conductor. The former first flute of the Berlin Philharmonic, who has since become one of the best-known classical instrumentalists in the world, will take up his new role in 1999. He will also be the soloist at the orchestra's 50th anniversary concert in the Festival Hall in February 1999. The Belfast-born Galway describes the appointment as "one of the most pleasantly surprising events in my career".

FILM: Robert Redford's Sundance Festival, the fiercely competitive launch-pad for independent movies, will have a British premiere again this year. *The Sea Change*, from the Winchester Films team that made *Shooting Fish*, will be shown at the Utah jamboree next month. In earlier years Sundance gave America its first sight of *Four Weddings and a Funeral* and *The Full Monty*.

POP: Rich voice of uncomplicated folk; low-key end to a soulful 14-month tour; blues tribute from the next generation

Unplugged and unvarnished

Beth Orton
Shepherds Bush Empire

Despite the praise heaped on Beth Orton's album, *Trailer Park*, which has sold 60,000 copies in Britain since it was released in October 1996, there is something about its dance-influenced production that seems rather cold and lacking in emotion. Her new *Best Bit* EP is a more traditional evocation of the folk-singer's art, and sounds instantly more engaging. But it is when she performs on stage that her songs truly come to life.

For one thing, Orton has a quiet, but very keenly felt rapport with her audience. It was her 27th birthday when she played at Shepherds Bush on Sunday, and although no mention was made of this, the more vocal members of the capacity crowd spontaneously sang her a verse of *Happy Birthday*. A thin, lanky figure dressed in a spangly gold dress and calf-length boots, Orton looked more like the girl next door in a party frock than a pop star. Her seven-piece band were a similarly sober bunch, with acoustic instruments, including violin and cello, outnumbering the electric, and unaided by any turntable, sampling or other techno-friendly effects whatsoever.

The net result of a presentation that was less varnished than most unplugged sessions these days was to focus attention squarely on Orton's voice. There was a haunting, autumnal richness to her tone in *Touch Me With Your Love* and *Tangent*, songs which she sang in the British folk tradition of artists such as Nick Drake and Jacqui McShee of Pentangle, while the rootsier *Skimming Stone* echoed the southern American style of Bobbie Gentry.

Along with favourites including *She Calls My Name, Sugar Boy, Someone's Daughter* and her poignant version of Ronnie Spector's *I Wish I Never Saw The Sunshine*, the set included a smattering of new songs, all put across with an uncomplicated honesty that has gone out of fashion among today's pop artists.

While her connections have marked her out as a travelling companion of the techno crowd, Orton's live show firmly took us back to an era when soul counted for more than the sum of the beats.

DAVID SINCLAIR

Give the hat a rest

Jamiroquai frontman Jason Kay had better book himself one hell of a holiday this Christmas. At a charity concert in the temporary arena erected beside Battersea Power Station, the skinny singer seemed utterly exhausted. The gig, which marked the end of a 14-month tour to promote *Travelling Without Moving*, Jamiroquai's multimillion selling third album, was at times as low-key as an impromptu rehearsal.

It didn't help that the local council had imposed noise restrictions so severe that the songs sounded as though they were being broadcast by a big ghetto blaster at the front of the barn-like auditorium. The real problem, however, was Kay. Usually, his sparky personality and non-stop dance routines are the focus for the show. On Sunday night Kay could scarcely summon the energy to stay standing.

Nevertheless the fashionable, but not too trendy, 6,000-strong crowd clearly enjoyed Jamiroquai's slick'n'soulful R&B. A three-piece brass section, drummer, guitarist, keyboard player and DJ made up a competent backing band, which managed to sustain a groove throughout a series of disappointingly down-tempo album tracks and rather lacklustre renditions of former singles such as *Space Cowboy* and *Too Young To Die*.

Tired and unemotional: Jamiroquai frontman Jason Kay

Jamiroquai
Battersea

The crowd's first chance to dance, during an infectiously funky *Cosmic Girl*, sadly didn't last long. Just as fans in the seated area at the rear of the hall had got up on their feet, Kay introduced digeridoo player Wallis Buchanan, before vanishing to leave the band to embark on a ten-minute instrumental. Only when Nigerian percussionist Sola Akingbola appeared did the singer seem to lose himself in the music. As Akingbola launched into a calypso-flavoured bongo solo, Kay did a short, Spanish-style dance, then flipped into a handstand to "walk" across the stage.

Stripped of its usual armoury of up-tempo tunes, Jamiroquai had more in common with early Eighties George Benson than with either the acid jazz scene, from which the band initially emerged, or Motown acts such as Stevie Wonder, with whom Kay is frequently compared.

"I can't wait to party after the show tonight," the singer revealed midway through the set. "I'm going to have such a wild time that you definitely won't want to see me at six in the morning." Few members of the audience believed Kay would stay awake that long.

LISA VERRICO

The son shines on father's day

Bernard Allison
100 Club

It was a difficult task. Luther Allison's death earlier this year robbed the blues world of one of its most innovative and gifted stars. Now, in this tribute evening, his son Bernard had to pay due respect to his father's obvious talents while proving himself to be a major player in his own right. To add to his problems, he arrived at the gig suffering from jetlag after an eight-hour flight from Martinique and without his keyboard player, who had decided that morning to leave the band — reducing then to a trio of Allison on lead guitar, Kim Yarborough on bass and Jeff Boudrait on drums.

That he was able to overcome all these difficulties with style, flair and a big measure of musical ability says much for this 32-year-old Chicago-born musician now resident in Paris.

With a fluency on the guitar and a strong voice just this side of harshness, he opened with some numbers from his new album, *Born With The Blues*, the most effective of which was the wry Aaron Burton-penned *Garbage Man* which gave Allison a chance to display one of his party pieces — a solo of vocal-like guitar runs which enabled him to "talk" to the audience and trade phrases, rather than licks, with Yarborough.

But once the party games were over Allison, who had paid his dues by playing in blues singer Koko Taylor's backing band, strapped on one of his father's guitars and got down to some serious slide guitar work. A strong and vibrant reading of Muddy Water's *I Can't Be Satisfied* was followed by an impassioned *The Sky Is Crying*, with Allison bringing a menacing and potent feel to this Elmore James classic.

Following in his father's flamboyant footsteps he enlivened his next solo by stepping off stage to wander through the audience, buttonhole a few fans, stop for a sip of beer at the bar and then walk upstairs, all without missing a beat.

The gig ended with the warhorse *Dust My Broom* which, even if it didn't stretch Allison too much, proved that the future of the blues — and of the Allison name — was in safe hands. Dad would have been proud.

JOHN CLARKE

Thank you, now back to obscurity

OPERA

THERE can be few causes more lost than the operas of Havergal Brian, the English composer who died 25 years ago leaving a vast output of largely unperformed works. Although some musicians have made the case for the old-fogeyish romanticism of his 32 symphonies, it seems that nothing can be said in favour of his five operas: certainly the Havergal Brian Society did not advance any cause by presenting this world premiere concert performance of *The Cenci*.

Apart from his early work *The Tigers*, Brian's operas were all written between 1949 and 1957. All take big subjects better dealt with by other composers: *The Cenci* was preceded by *Turandot* and followed by *Faust* and *Agamemnon*. As both Goldschmidt and Ginastera have shown, Shelley's tragedy of the teenage Beatrice Cenci, condemned by Church and State for conniving at the murder of her rapist father, makes strong operatic material, but Brian misses every dramatic opportunity.

Indeed, the work's welcome brevity — the score lasts just under two hours — means that vital scenes in Shelley, often the most harrowing, are omitted altogether. Worse still, Shelley's lines are mangled unpoetically by Brian's insensitive word-setting: those that are audible come across in unrelenting parlando, often with several syllables on a single pitch. Clumsy fanfares are the closest Brian comes to evoking the golden background of Renaissance Rome that any worthwhile composer would have painted into the orchestration. From the start of the 15-minute overture, tempos are steady and instrumental colour dull.

The music blossoms briefly at Beatrice's Farewell, but too late for the work to make any impact. Helen Field sang the role with as much conviction as possible, but Stuart Kale's words as Cardinal Camillo were lost under the thick orchestration. David Wilson-Johnson got most of Count Cenci's unpleasantness across and Inga Jonsdottir caught the serenity of his wife Lucretia, a role really too low for her smallish mezzo. Justin Lavender and Jeffrey Carl made good contributions.

All had to work hard under James Kelleher's over-enthusiastic baton, even when the Millennium Sinfonia's strings were a little soft-grained. London's musical life depends on performances of rarities, but this was one of the year's musical yawns.

JOHN ALLISON

Russian revelation

KENT NAGANO has conducted opera in Manchester before, notably in concert versions of *Bluebeard's Castle* and *Billy Budd*. Unlike its counterpart at Lyon Opera, however, the audience in the Bridgewater Hall has not had the opportunity to observe him at work in the romantic area at the centre of the repertoire. So now, after his performances of *Tosca* with the Hallé Orchestra and Choir and soloists from the European Opera Centre, he must be seen in a new light.

It is true that *Tosca* is not the most difficult score to conduct or to play. Even so, the style and the authority of his interpretation and the quality of the orchestral sound under his direction were a revelation. It is said that Nagano lacks passion, which might be true in some cases, but any more of that particular attribute in the first of the three *Tosca* performances would have been excessive. A conductor has to apply a fairly rigorous economy in a work of this length, as he certainly did; he also made sure of maximising the effect at the most stressful points.

Besides, with a Tosca like Lada Biriucov — the outstanding member of a cast drawn almost exclusively from Russia and Eastern Europe — there was little chance of anything but a passionate performance. She might have something of the Russian disregard for the fine detail but she has a most voluptuous voice, a vehement temperament and a strikingly handsome appearance. If the Cavaradossi, Viktor Afanasenko, is a less interesting prospect it is not because his vocal resources are unimpressive but because, at the age of nearly 40, he is surely rather too old for this kind of exercise and too set in his ways. As a Scarpia actually nine years younger, the awesomely dark-toned Bulgarian baritone Nikolai Dobrev gave much the more mature performance.

Taking advantage of the concert-hall conditions, Nagano abandoned his puzzling custom of positioning his principal singers towards the back of the platform and deployed them instead in a straight line at the front. While he could usefully have sent his Tosca and his Cavaradossi further back at those moments where they are meant to be heard offstage, the general quality of the balance he secured must surely have persuaded him to stay with that kind of formation in the future.

GERALD LARNER

GREAT BRITISH HOPES

Rising stars in the arts firmament

ED McCARDIE

Age: Just 30.

Profession: Publications officer for the further education unit in Stirling. Oh, and writer.

The writing is taking off: Last month he won £9,000 to fund writing a serial which, in competition with five other under-30s, he pitched to a scary audience of hard-eyed industry pros at the Drama Forum, the first of an intended annual conference on television drama.

How did he hear about this lion's den of an opportunity? "I took a week off work and went to an event called Movie Matters, which is held in Scotland each year for people like myself who have done one or two things and are hoping to make a career out of it. I was told about this pitch of sudden death two days before the deadline."

What will the money enable him to do with his project, *Thicker Than Water*? "Properly research and develop the scripts."

What was he up to before this break? He started writing two years ago "after a number of years of procrastination", while working in Poland for a British charity. He was then given support by the Scottish Film Production Fund to write a short film. The resulting piece, *Hard Nut: A Love Story*, was released as "warm-up" to the feature *Shooting Fish*. It will also be on Channel 4 in January, and won him a Bafta nomination as best new writer. "Obviously that's quite good currency for someone in my position. It's hard to overstate the importance of something getting made, even if it's only six or seven minutes long, when you're trying to make a breakthrough. For 18 months it's been my encouragement to go on."

Any literary heroes? "I suppose when I was young I liked the Hemingway thing, but I'm not sure how much of that was his life and how much his writing. Since I've decided to be a serious writer, it's more someone like Milan Kundera because of the fabulous structure of his work. When I think I'm ready, I'd like to tackle European themes and further afield." He now reads worldwide fiction. "These people play by totally different rules to ours. They're not hampered by the parameters that we define for ourselves here."

W. STEPHEN GILBERT

Richard Cork finds some out-of-the-ordinary Christmas books for discerning art lovers

A gallery under the tree

The lid of a marriage chest may seem an unlikely place to find a Renaissance masterpiece. But in 15th-century Italy some of the most outstanding artists were commissioned to execute paintings on these richly decorated pieces of wedding furniture. They were called *cassoni*, and Botticelli, Pesellino and Uccello all produced captivating images on their wood surfaces.

Now, for the first time, Graham Hughes has written a scholarly and substantial history of **Renaissance Cassoni** (Art Books International, £35). He shows how classical mythology and historical romance were fused with everyday quattrocento life to give these paintings their irresistible appeal.

Italian art provides the focus for several groundbreaking new art books. **Andrea del Verrocchio** tends to be remembered primarily as the teacher of Leonardo da Vinci, but he was an impressive sculptor in his own right, and Andrew Butterfield has done him justice in a pioneering study (Yale, £45). Verrocchio's range was remarkable, encompassing the playful charm of *Putto with a Dolphin* as well as the military grandeur of the great Colleoni monument in Venice. He deserves to be more widely celebrated.

Martin Kemp reminds us, in his stimulating **Behind the Picture: Art and Evidence in the Italian Renaissance** (Yale, £25), that Verrocchio often had to fight for his payments. The Mercanzia guild of Florence never paid the final instalments of Verrocchio's fee for an outstanding bronze group of Christ and St Thomas. In the end, he was forced to petition the Florentine government.

Kemp shows that even Michelangelo had financial problems with his patrons in the Vatican. The Pope's behaviour was shameful. He had every reason to be grateful, not only for the Sistine ceiling but for the later, titanic *Last Judgment* on the chapel's altar wall. Executed in 1534, this prodigious fresco has recently been cleaned. A multitude of powerful details, previously obscured by dirt and candle-smoke, are illustrated with stunning clarity in **Michelangelo: the Last Judgment** (Abrams, £49.95). The result is a revelation, with 150 colour reproductions enabling us to see the painting far better than we can in the chapel itself.

One of the tormented souls from the Sistine Chapel — and now in the stunning *Michelangelo: The Last Judgment*

Another Renaissance painting to benefit from cleaning, Holbein's *The Ambassadors*, is scrutinised by Oskar Batschmann and Pascal Griener in **Hans Holbein** (Reaktion, £40). Their lucid text provides an ideal accompaniment to the National Gallery's current exhibition of *The Ambassadors*. They set the painting securely in the context of Holbein's career. So much has been lost, including his great Thomas More family group and the mural of Henry VIII's dynasty in Whitehall Palace, but the authors are still able to show how Holbein proceeded from youthful apprenticeship in Augsburg to European eminence at the Tudor Court.

Although **Correggio** was Holbein's near-contemporary, the two painters could hardly have been more contrasted. Working in northern Italy, at a remove from the cultural dynamism of Florence and Rome, Correggio nevertheless enjoyed a flourishing career. Visitors to Parma are still astounded by the overwhelming fresco decorations he executed there, above all in his soaring and ecstatic *Assumption of the Virgin* in the cupola of the cathedral. Writing a perceptive, deeply researched and comprehensive study of Correggio's achievement (Yale, £45), David Ekserdjian has made a major contribution to Renaissance art history.

Even the most celebrated Italian artists are sometimes strangely neglected by writers. Bernini, whose fame as a Baroque sculptor extended far beyond his base in Rome, has long needed an up-to-date book on his multi-faceted career. Now Charles Avery has provided it. His **Bernini: Genius of the Baroque** (Thames & Hudson, £45) is a delight. Avery admits that Bernini the man was capable of alarming cruelty, especially towards his errant brother and mistress. But his sculpture remains sublime. Whether carving a boisterous bust of the plump Cardinal Scipione Borghese, or fashioning the colossal bronze Baldacchino in St Peter's Basilica, Bernini was supreme.

Guido Reni, who once enjoyed a reputation almost as towering as Bernini's, later suffered an eclipse. But he is no longer automatically derided for his weeping penitents with their doleful, upturned eyes. Reni's mastery of Baroque painting is acknowledged once more, and Richard E. Spear provides a compelling analysis of his complex character in **The "Divine" Guido** (Yale, £40). Apparently a virgin, possibly homosexual and definitely a hopeless gambler, Reni is fascinating. Spear has no qualms about speculating, and brings his secretive subject back to life.

Another extraordinary 17th-century Italian, the antiquary and natural scientist Cassiano dal Pozzo, is celebrated in a handsome new volume. An insatiable collector, he commissioned more than 7,000 drawings documenting the late Renaissance world. Most are preserved in the Royal Collection at Windsor, and the full extent of his so-called "Paper Museum" is now being revealed.

The latest instalment, by David Freedberg and Enrico Baldini, is devoted to watercolours and gouaches of **Citrus Fruit** (Harvey Miller, £150). The authors' scholarship is impressive, and the glowing images have an immediate, sumptuous appeal.

Paul Delaroche was the 19th-century artist who, confronted by the advent of photography, made the apocalyptic declaration that "from today, painting is dead". But he went on to achieve enormous fame as a painter, and made use of the camera in his later pictures. Although forgotten for many decades, his *Execution of Lady Jane Grey* is now a visitors' favourite at the National Gallery. And Stephen Bann's **Paul Delaroche: History Painted** (Reaktion, £40) makes impressive amends for the long years of neglect.

The classical ideals worshipped by Delaroche began to be usurped soon after his death in 1856. Young artists looked far beyond Europe for stimulus, and they discovered rich inspiration in Oceanic art.

In the first comprehensive study for more than 30 years, the painting, sculpture and architecture of **Polynesia, Micronesia and Melanesia** is discussed with authority (Abrams, £150). Headed by Douglas Newton, a team of scholars reveals the brazen, often brilliantly coloured impact of the images made by these resourceful islanders.

Among their many beguiling achievements, body painting is perhaps the most direct form of self-expression. And Karl Groning's **Decorated Skin: A World Survey of Body Art** (Thames & Hudson, £45) reveals just how fundamental the body-decorating impulse really is, tracing it from Stone-Age times through to the tattooing and flesh-piercing of today.

LONDON CONCERTS: A Goehr premiere; Italianate Russians; and two exciting chamber ensembles

Composer revisits past influences

THE final instalment of the London Sinfonietta's triple 30th-birthday celebration featured a new work by Alexander Goehr set in a tightly constructed programme that provided an illuminating context. Given that Goehr's father, the conductor Walter Goehr, was a pupil of Schoenberg, it made sense to open with a piece by the Second Viennese master that established one of the pillars of the young composer's musical upbringing.

The Three Pieces for Chamber Orchestra (1910) last a total of three minutes and recall another Schoenberg pupil, Webern, in their fastidious micro-textures. Oliver Knussen, having conducted a finely observed performance, sensed that we had had insufficient time to adjust to their miniature scale, and played them through again.

The new Goehr work, *Idées Fixes*, subtitled "Sonata for 13", is a 17-minute piece in one continuous movement. Unified by three ubiquitous motifs and a pleasingly symmetrical structure, it displays the economic processes and austere language characteristic of the composer. Indeed, Goehr speaks of a constraint he imposed on himself: a strict, non-decorative application of variation form, following a hint from Brahms (himself an early influence on Schoenberg).

The hard-edged wind sonorities of Stravinsky were never far away, however, and all these influences, plus that of Messiaen, were evident too in Goehr's Little Symphony (1963), written in memory of his father. The work has its severe aspects — notably in the mordant Scherzo — but the second-movement variations on a chorale seem to recall the 19th-century tradition of Brahms refracted through Berg as well as Schoenberg and Stravinsky.

From the same period we heard also Stravinsky's Movements (1958-59), another economically constructed — in this case serial — work. After a delicately poised performance of this mini-concerto for piano (Peter Serkin) and chamber orchestra, Knussen asked, more diffidently this time: "Would you mind hearing that again?" Second time round, one noticed not just the crisp, laconic gestures but also the unifying string lines and even consonant harmonies.

The Berlin-born Stefan Wolpe, whose career embraced Dadaism, Yiddish text-setting and bebop, composed many individual works worth investigating, but the Piece for Piano and 16 Instruments is not one of the more rewarding. Despite the eloquent advocacy of the Sinfonietta, Knussen and Serkin, it is difficult to imagine that the UK premiere of this sterile 1962 piece will do much to advance Wolpe's cause.

BARRY MILLINGTON

Moscow seen from the south

RPO/Gatti
Albert Hall

LAST Sunday night's concert of an all-Russian programme by the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra under Daniele Gatti took a fresh look at familiar music, *John Allison writes*. All three of the featured composers — Stravinsky, Mussorgsky and Prokofiev — received idiomatic treatment. But Gatti is too much of an individualist to play them in a completely traditional way. It may have been his Italian temperament, but it was beauty of line that seemed to be the uppermost concern here, and these performances tapped the rich melodic vein that was in any case partly bequeathed to Russian composers by their Italian counterparts.

As it is already an arrangement, there is more room for freedom in the orchestral version of *Pictures at an Exhibition* than in Mussorgsky's piano original. Gatti brought a fresh ear for colour to his account, which meant that at times the orchestration sounded rather more like Respighi than Ravel, and he drew expansive, sonorous playing from the RPO. The opening *Promenade* had broad sweep, and the *Old Castle* came across as a delicately perfumed scene.

Just occasionally the sound was too soft-grained. The progress of the old cart in *Bydlo* was a little light, and some of grotesque details that mark *Baba Yaga* went missing. But Gatti shaped the movements with a sure hand, culminating in a powerful account of *The Great Gate of Kiev*. The performance certainly swept away the cobwebs that had made the opening of Stravinsky's *Circus Polka* appear lacklustre, though that too was quickly steered towards its rousing close.

A few of the speeds in Gatti's performance of Prokofiev's *Alexander Nevsky* cantata may also have been on the indulgent side, but then he didn't have to keep in synch with Sergei Eisenstein's famous movie, from which this cantata is drawn. He justified any slowness in his heartfelt handling of the tender melodies and stirring patriotic tunes, and was no slouch in the splendidly incisive battle music.

The London Symphony Chorus made exciting and alert contributions, but the best singing came from Irina Tchistyakova, who disclosed an even, dark-coloured mezzo in the *Field of the Dead* solo. Her interior lament captured the special quality that makes this some of the greatest film music ever written.

Richly rewarding rarities

Fibonacci Sequence/
Safri Duo
Wigmore Hall

IT WOULD take more space than is available here to explain why they are called the **Fibonacci Sequence**, *Barry Millington writes*. But somehow the name — inventive and stylish — captures the essence of Kathron Sturrock's excellent ensemble.

It is a Protean group, consisting of more than a dozen individuals who come together in various formations to play repertoire both mainstream and unfamiliar, with the emphasis decidedly on the latter. Monday's programme was typically innovative and wide-ranging, yet also coherent, with three works from eastern European composers (Martinu, Dohnányi and Ippolitov-Ivanov), two from French (Poulenc and Ravel) and Mozart's Horn Quintet in E flat.

The Trio for oboe, bassoon and piano by Poulenc was quintessential Fibonacci — witty, pungent, capricious — and the performance by Christopher O'Neal, Richard Skinner and Kathron Sturrock was needle-sharp. The Mozart gave horn player Stephen Stirling a chance to shine with admirable support from richly textured lower strings.

Ravel's Introduction and Allegro for harp, flute and string quartet offered harpist Gillian Tingay the starring role, though she too was given a sensitive backdrop. Martinu's resourceful Trio for flute, cello and piano was well worth unearthing, offering each player opportunities for soulful expressiveness. But it was Dohnányi's Sextet that rather stole the show. Irredeemably romantic, Dohnányi's music both soothes the senses and commands the attention. The precipitous finale, for example, suddenly erupts, with no warning, in a Viennese waltz — a moment relished by the ensemble, who whirled round the ballroom with abandon.

Virtuosity was very much the watchword, too, for the recital the following night by the **Safri Duo**. These young Danish percussionists gave an enthralling display, undeniably impressive even if the aesthetic value of all but one item was questionable.

Pieces of Wood and *Nagoya Marimbas* were typical Steve Reich in that they elevated metrical complexity over all other criteria. Wayne Siegel's *42nd Street Rondo* gave the players more improvisational freedom, but is scarcely more interesting. The Duo brought home the horrendous rhythmical intricacies of Andy Pape's *CaDance 4 2* by getting half the audience to clap groups of four beats against the other half's five. Undoubtedly a *tour de force*, but again of doubtful artistic merit.

Transcriptions of a Bach Prelude and Ravel's Pavane supplied the ravishing sonorities lacking elsewhere, though the former was a travesty of the original in every respect. *Fireplay* by "Fuzzy" — a composer I had not previously encountered — was another circus act, leaving Jacob Ter Veldhuis's *Goldrush* alone to combine rhythmic vigour with timbral interest.

TODAY'S CHOICE

A daily guide to arts and entertainment compiled by Marit Hargie

LONDON

FESTIVE AT 50: An array of glittering musical stars assemble to celebrate the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra's 50th birthday. Montserrat Caballé, Andrea Bocelli and the Labeque Sisters are but a few of the artists joining the RPO in a programme featuring music by Respighi, Bizet, Gershwin and Puccini. Daniele Gatti, Sir Simon Rattle and José Collado take turns with the baton.
Albert Hall, Kensington Gore, SW7 (0171-589 8212). Tonight, 7.30pm Ⓢ

THE GOVERNMENT INSPECTOR: *Jonathan Kent directs* Tom Hollander as the presumed inspector, Brian Murphy as his servant and Ian McDiarmid as the devious Mayor in Gogol's matchless satiric comedy.
Almeida Theatre, 108 Almeida Street, N1 (0171-359 4404). Opens tonight, 7pm. Then Mon-Sat, 7.30pm; mat Sat, 3pm. Until January 31. Ⓢ

THE MERRY WIVES OF WINDSOR: Ian Judge's jolly production, with Leslie Phillips being crammed into the laundry basket by Joanna McCallum and Susannah York. Edward Petherbridge plays Ford.
Barbican, Silk Street, EC2 (0171-638 8891). Opens tonight, 7pm. In rep Ⓢ

PHILHARMONIA ORCHESTRA: Returns only for this *performance of* Verdi's Requiem. James Levine conducts the orchestra and the Philharmonia Chorus joined by a line-up of solo luminaries including Roberto Alagna *(who replaces the indisposed* Pavarotti), Renée Fleming, Luciana D'Intino and Roberto Scandiuzzi.
Festival Hall, South Bank, SE1 (0171-960 4242). Tonight, 7.30pm Ⓢ

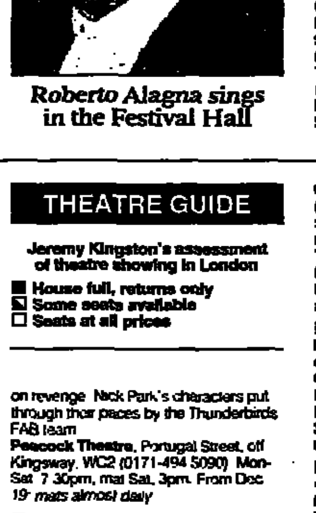
ELSEWHERE

BIRMINGHAM: A Grand Christmas Gala by the **New English Orchestra, Singers and Dancers** offers Mozart with a difference in a danced performance of *Eine Kleine Nachtmusik*. The choreography for the work was especially devised for the orchestra's visit to the Salzburg Festival earlier this year. Other festive pieces featured are Rossini's *William Tell* Overture, and pieces from *Carmen* and *L'Arlesienne* by Bizet. The evening concludes with spirituals set to jazz dance, and carols for all.
Symphony Hall, Broad Street (0121-212 3333). Tonight, 7.30pm Ⓢ

BRISTOL: Jez Butterworth's **Mojo**, a glittering black comedy set in a near-fantasy Soho of 1950s gangsters. With Anton Saunders as Baby and Ross Boatman as Mickey. Ian Hastings directs.
New Vic, King Street (0117 987 7877). Opens tonight, 7.30pm. Then Mon-Wed, 7.30pm; Thur-Sat, 8pm; mats Thur and Sat, 2.30pm. Until January 17. Ⓢ

LEEDS: Continuing her successful collaboration with **Opera North**, Annabel Arden directs the company in a new production of *The Magic Flute*. A new look is brought to Mozart's allegorical tale by designer Roswitha Gerlitz, with lighting by Paule Constable. The cast is lead by Margaret Richardson as *Pamina*, with Neill Archer in the role of Tamino and Cara O'Sullivan as The Queen of Night. Brad Cohen conducts.
Grand Theatre, 46 New Briggate (0113-245 9351/440971). Opens tonight, 7.15pm. Ⓢ

POOLE: Settle down to some surreal midwinter cheer in the company of one of the hottest comic properties around as the award-winning stand-up Harry Hill's 50-venue national tour hits town tonight. With stalwart support from Stouffer the Cat.
Arts Centre, Kingland Road (01202 685222). Tonight, 7.30pm. Ⓢ



Roberto Alagna sings in the Festival Hall

LONDON GALLERIES

British Museum: *Cartier 1900-1939* (0171-323 8525) . **Hayward:** Objects of Desire: The Modern Still Life (0171-928 3144) **Museum of London:** Bedlam: Custody, care and cure, 1247-1997 (0171-600 0807) **National:** Hogarth's Marriage A-la-Mode (0171-747 2885) . **National Portrait:** Sir Henry Raeburn (1756-1823) (0171-306 0055) . **Royal Academy:** Victorian Fairy Painting (0171-439 7438) .. **Serpentine:** Piero Manzoni (0171-402 6075) **Tate:** Turner on the Loire The Tour through Northern France (0171-887 8000) . **V & A:** Carl and Karin Larsson: Creators of the Swedish Style (0171-938 8349/8441)

THEATRE GUIDE

Jeremy Kingston's assessment of theatre showing in London

- ■ **House full, returns only**
- ▨ **Some seats available**
- ☐ **Seats at all prices**

▨ **BEAUTY AND THE BEAST:** Disney's film turned into a hit Broadway musical. Julie-Alanah Brighten and Alasdair Harvey as the leads.
Dominion, *Tottenham Court Road, W1* (0171-416 6060). Mon-Sat, 7.30pm; mat Sat, 2.30pm.

☐ **THE BOYS *IN* THE BAND:** Mart Crowley's ground-breaking gay play from 1968 now something of a period piece with its "gay means witty but wretched" message.
Aldwych, The Aldwych, WC2 (0171-416 6003). Mon-Sat, 8pm; mats Thur and Sat, 3pm

■ **CHICAGO:** Revised version of the celebrated Kander & Ebb musical directed by Walter Bobbie. Starring Ruthie Henshall, Ute Lemper, Henry Goodman and Nigel Planer.
Adelphi, Strand, London WC2 (0171-344 0055). Mon-Sat, 8pm; mats Wed and Sat, 2.30pm Ⓢ

☐ **CHICKS WITH FLICKS:** Jackie Clune's impressive (and doubtless camp) musical tribute to the disco divas of the 70s. Her impersonation of Karen Carpenter is said to be flawless.
King's Head, Upper Street, N1 (0171-226 1916). Tue-Thur, 8pm; Fri and Sat, 7pm and 9pm, Sun, 3.30pm Ⓢ

☐ ***CYRANO DE BERGERAC:*** *The* sell-out RSC production from Stratford, with Antony Sher as Rostand's tragic romantic hero. Gregory Doran directs.
Lyric, Shaftesbury Ave, W1 (0171-494 5054). Mon-Sat, 7.30pm; mats Wed and Sat, 2pm.

▨ **A GRAND NIGHT OUT:** Wallace and Gromit take to the stage for *Christmas, pursued to London by the* Penguin, escaped from gaol and bent on revenge. Nick Park's characters put through their paces by the Thunderbirds FAB team.
Peacock Theatre, Portugal Street, off Kingsway, WC2 (0171-494 5090). Mon-Sat, 7.30pm, mat Sat, 3pm. From Dec *19: mats almost daily*

☐ **THE HOUSE OF DESIRES:** One Horse present a remarkable comedy by the 17th-century poet, dramatist and nun, Sor Juana Ines de la Cruz, who was eventually ordered to stop writing after claiming a woman's right to be an intellectual. Her play's subject is three men and two women locked in *overlapping love triangles, and also* locked together in a house.
BAC, Lavender Hill, SW11 (0171-223 2223). Tue-Sat, 8pm; mat Sun, 6pm. Until December 21. Ⓢ

▨ **LITTLE EYOLF:** Terrific playing by Robert Glenister and Joanne Pearce at the heart of Adrian Noble's superb Ibsen production. Guilt, remorse and *renewal on the fjord. See review, right*
Pit, Barbican Centre, Silk St, EC2 (0171-638 8891). Tonight and tomorrow, 7.15pm; mat tomorrow, 2pm. In rep.

▨ ***MORE GRIMM TALES:*** A second group of stories by the same team of Carol Ann Duffy (writer) and Tim Supple (director) who created the excellent 1994 show. Probably just as marvellously macabre.
***The Young Vic**, 66 The Cut, SE1* (0171-928 6363). Mon-Sat at various times (10.30am, 1.30pm, 2.30pm, 7pm) and on Sun (Jan 4, 11, 18), 4pm Ⓢ

■ **OTHELLO:** David Harewood makes his National Theatre debut in the title role of Sam Mendes's production, with Claire Skinner as Mrs Othello and Simon Russell Beale as Iago.
National (Cottesloe), South Bank, SE1 (0171-928 2252). Tonight and tomorrow, 7pm. In rep

▨ **STRANGER'S HOUSE:** Mary Peate directs the main German production in *the New European Writing season. Dea* Loher's play follows the unfolding crisis after the arrival of a Macedonian deserter in a German town.
Royal Court Upstairs (Ambassadors), West St, WC2 (0171-565 5000). Tonight and Sat, 8pm

LONG RUNNERS

☐ ***Blood Brothers:*** *Phoenix (0171-369 1733)* . ▨ **Buddy:** Strand (0171-930 8800) ▨ **Cats:** New London (0171-405 0072) .. ☐ **The Complete Works of William Shakespeare (Abridged):** *Criterion (0171-369 1737)* . ▨ **Miss Saigon:** Drury Lane (0171-494 5400) . ☐ **The Mousetrap:** St Martin's (0171-836 1443) . . ▨ **Oliver!:** Palladium (0171-494 5020) ▨ **Starlight Express:** Apollo Victoria (0171-416 6054) ☐ **The Woman in Black:** Fortune (0171-836 2238)

Ticket information supplied by Society of London Theatre

CINEMA GUIDE

Geoff Brown's assessment of films in London and (where indicated with the symbol ◆) on release across the country

NEW RELEASES

A FURTHER GESTURE (15): Stephen Rea's escaped IRA prisoner finds life hard in Manhattan. Eloquent human drama, with Rosana Pastor and Alfred Molina. Director, Robert Dornhelm.
ABC Piccadilly (0171-437 3561)

◆ **I KNOW WHAT YOU DID LAST SUMMER** *(18): Reckless teenagers get* their comeuppance. Variable horror film from the writer of *Scream*. With Jennifer Love Hewitt, Freddie Prinze Jr.
Odeons: Kensington (0181-315 4214) **Swiss Cottage** (0181-315 4220) **Plaza** Ⓢ (0990 888990) **Ritzy** (0171-737 2121) **UCI Whiteleys** Ⓢ (0990 888990) **Virgins: Fulham Road** (0171-370 2636) **Trocadero** Ⓢ (0181-970 6015) **Warner** Ⓢ (0171-437 4343)

PERSONS UNKNOWN (18): Joe Mantegna, Kelly Lynch and Naomi Watts burn their fingers stealing drug money. So-so crime thriller, directed by George Hickenlooper.
Metro (0171-437 0757)

◆ **TOMORROW NEVER DIES** (12): Pierce Brosnan's James Bond combats an evil media mogul (Jonathan Pryce). Set piece thrills, but little sparkle. With Michelle Yeoh and Teri Hatcher.
ABC Tottenham Court Road (0171-636 6148) **Barbican** Ⓢ *(0171-638 8891)* **Clapham Picture House** (0171-498 3323) **Curzon Mayfair** (0171-369 1720) **Greenwich** (0181-235 3005) **Notting Hill Coronet** Ⓢ (0171-727 6705) **Odeons: Camden Town** (0181-315 4255) **Kensington** (0181-315 4214) **Leicester Square** (0181-315 4215) **Marble Arch** (0181-315 4216) **Swiss Cottage** (0181-315 4220) **Ritzy** (0171-737 2121) **Screen/Baker Street** (0171-935 2772) **Virgins: Chelsea** (0171-352 5096) **Fulham Road** (0171-*370 2636*)

CURRENT

◆ **THE BORROWERS** (U): Minuscule *scavengers fight for their home.* Exhilarating family film, much adapted from the children's classic. With John Goodman, Jim Broadbent.
Barbican Ⓢ (0171-638 8891) *Greenwich (0181-235 3005)* **Odeons: Kensington** (0181-315 4214) **Marble Arch** (0181-315 4216) **Swiss Cottage** (0181-315 4220) **Plaza** Ⓢ (0990 888990) **UCI Whiteleys** Ⓢ (0990 888990) **Virgins: Fulham Road** (0171-370 2636) **Trocadero** Ⓢ (0181-970 6015) **Warner** Ⓢ (0171-437 4343)

◆ **COP LAND** (15): Lazy sheriff *ponders what to do about corrupt cops.* Flawed but absorbing drama, with Sylvester Stallone, Harvey Keitel, Robert De Niro. Director, James Mangold.
Greenwich (0181-235 3005) **Odeons: Camden** (0181-315 4255) **Kensington** (0181-315 4214) **Marble Arch** (0181-315 4216) **Swiss Cottage** (0181-315 4220) **Ritzy** (0171-737 2121) **Screen/Baker St** (0171-935 2772) **Screen/Green** (0171-226 3520) ***UCI* Whiteleys** Ⓢ (0990 888990) **Virgins: Chelsea** (0171-352 5096) **Trocadero** Ⓢ (0181-970 6015) **Warner** Ⓢ (0171-437 4343)

◆ **THE FULL MONTY** (15): Unemployed steelworkers strip for cash. Bouncy British comedy, with Robert Carlyle, Tom Wilkinson, Mark Addy.
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WILDE (15): Stephen Fry as Oscar Wilde. Fine and touching, though the film is more timid than you might expect.
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The classic still hacks it

The Front Page
Donmar

Ben Hecht and Charles MacArthur, Chicago reporters turned Broadway dramatists, never lost their nostalgia for the raucous mayhem of the 1920s newsroom. That is evident from memoirs that fondly remember an era when an orthodontist who raped a patient was fêted with the headline "Dentist Fills Wrong Cavity". It is equally apparent in their joint triumph, *The Front Page*.

As Sam Mendes's revival at the Donmar confirms, this remains a wonderfully, wickedly ambivalent piece. Hecht and MacArthur know they should disapprove of a journo who, hearing over the phone of murder and injury, emits happy gurgles of "fine" and "swell". They know that no decent person would beg a sheriff to bring forward an execution so that he can catch an early-morning deadline. But they cannot disguise the relish they feel for the two main characters played so robustly by Griff Rhys Jones and Alun Armstrong at the Donmar: the peppy newshound Hildy Johnson and his bullying, brutal managing editor, Walter Burns.

Since the play has spawned a trio of movies, you probably know the story. Johnson is off to the security of marriage and a job in advertising in New York when, crash, bullets splinter the windows of the pressroom in Chicago's criminal courts. The young anarchist who is to be hanged next day has escaped. How can a good reporter run from a big story that, when he manages to secrete the fugitive in a colleague's rolltop desk, seems about to become a gigantic scoop? Of course he can't — and the authors' sympathies are with him and his boss, not with his tearful fiancée, nor with the sentimentally conceived whore who berates the coarse, cynical newsmen with "Shame on you! A poor little crazy fellow alone with the Angel of Death, and you're cracking jokes."

A play that began as an exposé ends as a celebration of tabloid journalism. All is sleazy verve and seedy gusto as the pressmen battle for their exclusives and corrupt politicians for the execution that will win them the upcoming election. This is a world of lies, tricks, graft, blackmail and violence — and that is the way Hecht and MacArthur like it. The universe outside is for cissy nine-to-fivers and New York "lizzies".

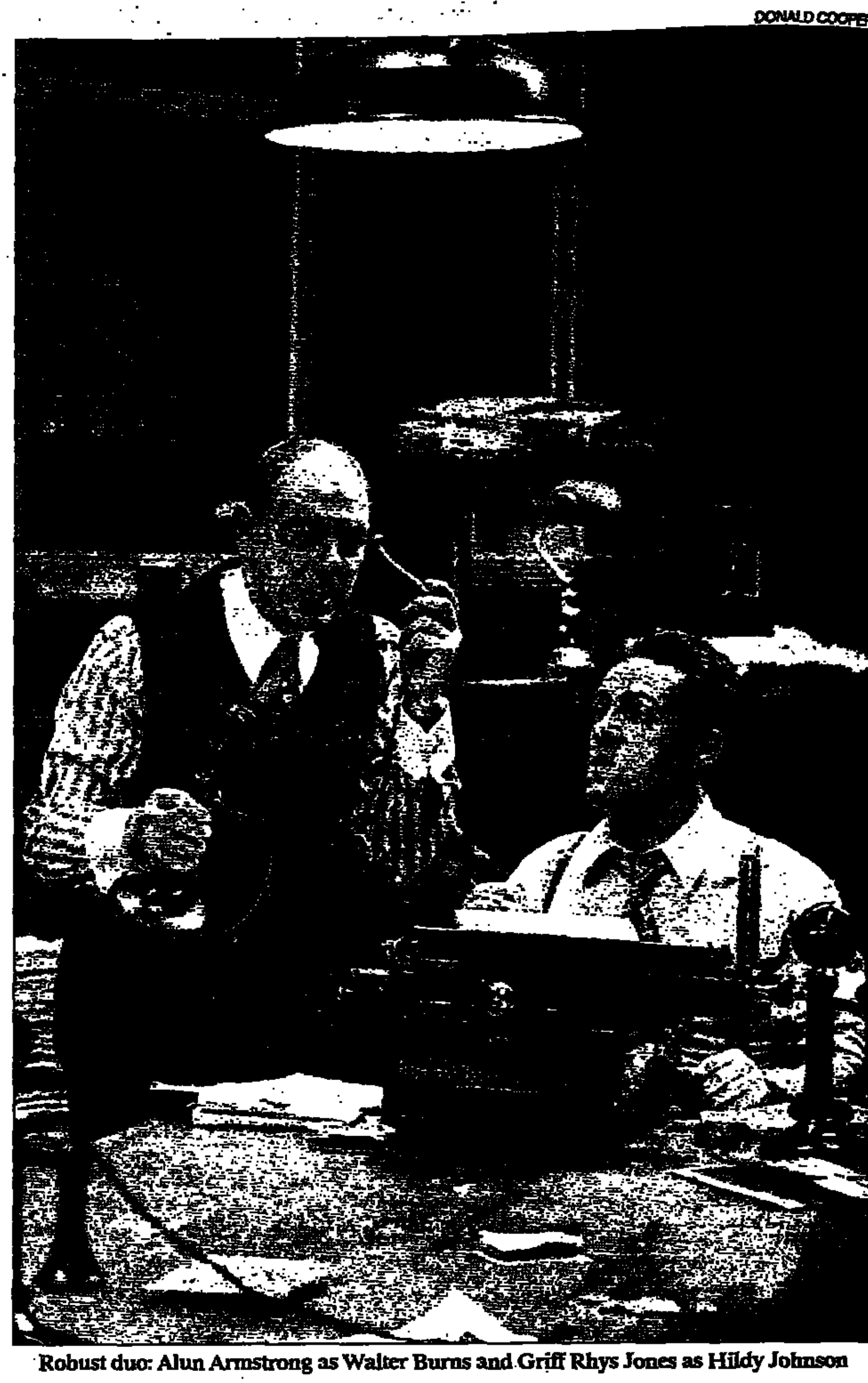
It would be absurdly humourless to moralise or complain, especially when Mendes's production manages both to evoke the dingy, run-down atmosphere of the newsroom, with its endless racist slurs and misogynist cracks, and to keep the fun racing along. One or two actors try too hard to be funny and become mannered. But there are nice performances from Adam Godley as the pressroom's resident nerd and prig, Christopher Benjamin as a sly, fake-genial mayor, and, especially, a rasping Armstrong as the champion bruiser of Windy City journalism.

Rhys Jones, with his bustling manner and bubbly voice, isn't my idea of the "lusty, hoodlumesque, half-drunk caballero" of the play's stage directions. But he brims with energy and brings all his comic expertise to the panic of a Johnson pulled one way by his prospective wife and mother-in-law and the other by those macho instincts Hecht and MacArthur surreptitiously share. I laughed a lot.

BENEDICT NIGHTINGALE

● *This review appeared in late editions yesterday*

DONALD COOPER



Robust duo: Alun Armstrong as Walter Burns and Griff Rhys Jones as Hildy Johnson

A fatal flaw conquered

Little Eyolf
Barbican Pit

PAST productions of this late Ibsen play led me to believe that it was fatally flawed by abrupt changes of tone. Written after *The Master Builder*, where a poisoned marriage ends with the husband's death, Ibsen contrived a way for a stricken couple to carry on. But after what Alfred Allmers and his Rita have undergone — death of love, death of ambition, death of their nine-year-old crippled son — the hints of an even modestly happy future have always looked improbable.

But in Adrian Noble *Little Eyolf* has found its director. When Robert Glenister and Joanne Pearce stand alongside each other at the close, their prospects may not be truly hopeful; this really doesn't matter: what has proved so convincing is the route that has brought them to this point. Noble's production and his cast — unchanged from its opening at Stratford — establish the play's unflinching exposure of passion and conscience as grippingly persuasive drama.

Rob Howell's design pares down Ibsen's three cluttered sets to a bare ground sparsely occupied by table and benches. The background fjord is suggested by a translucent sheet where radiant blues float into peacock greens, while the cracks in the ground that radiate from a spot near the table perhaps mark the very spot where the baby Eyolf fell. Far from seeming artifice, the cracks beneath the feet combine with Michael Meyer's resonant translation and the gestures and haunted eyes of the players to compose the fierce tensions of the play.

In the increasingly fraught scenes, where husband and wife switch frantically between blaming the other and accusing themselves for Eyolf's doomed life, Pearce and Glenister traverse the stage in tight curves like snakes over sand, endlessly repeating the same movements in the way that their thoughts go over the same mental territory. They give unsurpassable displays of corroding grief.

There is also fine playing from Derbhle Crotty as the sister sandwiched between them, from Damian Lewis's attentive Borghejm, and a Rat Wife from Bridget Turner, on stage for only five minutes but whose sweetly sinister words echo beyond the end.

JEREMY KINGSTON

Magical storytime

Arabian Nights
Everyman, Cheltenham

ONE of the unpredictable joys of the *Arabian Nights* is never knowing into which of the 1001 tales you will be plunged. In Sheila Mander's production it's the story of the storyteller, the beautiful Scheherazade, that anchors this Christmas show. That and a fez full of songs by Richard Taylor that seamlessly sweep Scheherazade and Gromar, the resident genie, from one chapter to the next.

The Arabs may be dressed in their pastel pantomime best but there are a couple of sharp edges that have to be avoided. Stewart Thompson plays the sulky Sultan, who kills virgins on a nightly basis because his wife ran away with a servant. He also doubles as the evil uncle who holds an innocent girl and her sick brother to ransom. Straws don't get much shorter than his when it comes to bartering for the loyalties of an army of schoolchildren.

Emma Jay Thomas's Scheherazade, who is married to the former, carries all with her first simper, barely needing her song, *Scheherazade's Panic*, to reveal that she has only avoided death because of her ability to tell ripping yarns. But as the thousandth night arrives she finds she's run out of inspiration.

Cue Ross MacKenzie's flakey genie. "Cover me in camel droppings," he howls, in a fair imitation of Scoobie Doo, as the two embark on a dangerous trip to the sleazy side of town: Scheherazade to find inspiration for her stories, Gromar to rediscover his powers. Arab robbers attack them like Keystone Cops, and Adrian Sarple's Ajib dives in to save them like Bruce Lee. Wicked Uncle Schahzabac tosses them into the clouds, and Joshua Bancel's piratical Sinbad rescues them from the middle of the ocean.

Mander's production, however, refuses to degenerate into pantomime, which proves rather frustrating for the youngest children, keen for more slapstick and interaction. But Taylor's music and Marty Flood's beautifully costumed designs keep the story at a mythic, and magical, distance. What's being celebrated is the illustrated art of storytelling. "The human imagination is deeper than the deepest well," says a booming voiceover at one point. Quite a few young imaginations enjoyed an unexpected tumble.

JAMES CHRISTOPHER

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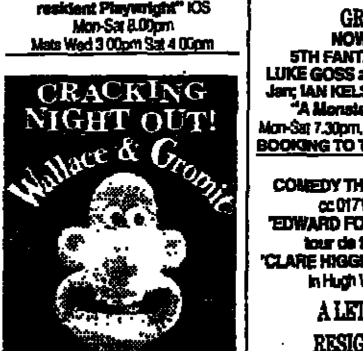

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Queen's Bench Divisional Court

Fairness often demands reasons

Regina v Ministry of Defence, Ex parte Murray

Before Lord Bingham of Cornhill, Lord Chief Justice and Mr Justice Hooper

[Judgment December 15]

Although there was no general overriding principle of law which required a decision-making body to give reasons for its decision, fairness would in the particular circumstances often demand that it did so.

Therefore, fairness did require that a court-martial should have given reasons for rejecting the evidence of a soldier of long and exemplary service that the effects of an anti-malarial drug had caused him to commit an offence of wounding, to which he pleaded guilty, and for sentencing him to imprisonment with consequent obligatory dismissal and reduction to the ranks.

The Queen's Bench Divisional Court so stated when granting an application for judicial review by Colin Murray and quashing the decisions of a district court-martial which had rejected the causal connection evidence and sentenced him to six months imprisonment, to be reduced to the ranks and dismissed from the Army following his plea of guilty to a civil offence, contrary to section 70 of the Army Act 1955, namely wounding contrary to section 20 of the Offences against the Persons Act 1861.

The applicant's challenge that the sentence was unreasonable in the *Wednesbury* sense [([1948] 1 KB 223) was rejected.

The applicant, then a sergeant in 1 Royal School of Military Engineering Regiment, having pleaded guilty to wounding, adduced evidence of his record as an exemplary soldier of 20 years service whose commission of the offence was totally out of character and, on his case, either wholly or partly due his ingestion of the anti-malarial drug, mefloquine.

The court-martial reached its conclusion on the evidence and passed sentence without giving reasons. Dismissal was the obligatory result of a sentence of imprisonment, rather than one of detention, with the consequence that the applicant was unable to complete 22 years service which would have carried with it considerable financial benefits.

The sentence was confirmed by the confirming officer, who had also been the convening officer, and two subsequent petitions for review were rejected, no reasons ever being given. Under the provisions then in force no right to seek leave to appeal against sentence lay to the Courts-Martial Appeal Court.

On the only available remedy, the present application for judicial review, no affidavit explaining the reasons was adduced by the Ministry of Defence.

Miss Clare Montgomery, QC and Mr Richard Wormald for the applicant; Mr James Eadie for the Ministry of Defence.

MR JUSTICE HOOPER said that given the applicant's exemplary background and that any act of violence was entirely out of character, had given the evidence he had adduced, an explanation as to why the court thought he had reacted as he had would have been desirable.

Even if the court were right to reach its conclusion, it would have been desirable to have had an explanation as to why it was thought that he should be sentenced as he had been and in particular why imprisonment and dismissal rather than detention was thought necessary. He, his family and regiment were entitled, it might be thought, to some explanation.

His Lordship referred to the statutory framework in place at the relevant time, which made no provision for the giving of reasons in present circumstances. He also referred to subsequent changes, effected by the Armed Forces Act 1996 and the Courts-Martial (Army) Rules (SI 1997 No 169), saying that of relevance, or possible relevance, were the provisions that:

(i) There was now a right to seek leave to appeal against sentence to the Courts-Martial Appeal Court; (ii) the judge advocate was now a member of the court, although not present while the other members deliberated on a charge; (iii) the judge advocate might in open court question the court on any finding of fact reached during its deliberations on the findings on any charge; (iv) any reasons for sentence were, with the sentence, to be announced in open court; (v) provision was made in the rules for determining disputes of fact after a finding of guilt, and (vi) the reviewing authority was now required to give reasons for its decision if, inter alia, a petition was presented under section 113(1) of the 1955 Act as amended by the 1996 Act.

Miss Montgomery had relied on *R v Civil Service Appeal Board, Ex parte Cunningham* ([1992] ICR 816), *R v Secretary of State for the Home Department, Ex parte Doody* ([1994] 1 AC 531) and *R v Higher Education Funding Council, Ex parte Institute of Dental Surgery* ([1994] 1 WLR 241).

From those authorities the following principles might be deduced:

1 The law did not at present recognise a general duty to give reasons.

2 Where a statute conferred on any body the power to make decisions affecting individuals, the court not only required the procedure prescribed by statute to be followed, but would imply just such additional procedural standards as would ensure the attainment of fairness.

3 In the absence of a requirement to give reasons, the person seeking to argue that they should have been given had to show that the procedure adopted of not giving reasons was unfair.

4 There was a perceptible trend towards an insistence on greater openness in the making of administrative decisions.

5 In deciding whether fairness required a tribunal to give reasons regard would be had not only to the first instance hearing but also to the availability and nature of any appellate remedy, or remedy by way of judicial review; (a) absence of any appellate right might be a factor in deciding that reasons should be given; and (b) if it was important that there should be an effective means of detecting the kind of error, by way of judicial review, which would entitled the court to intervene, reasons might have to be disclosed.

6 The fact that a tribunal was carrying out a judicial function was a consideration in favour of a requirement of reasons, particularly where personal liberty was concerned.

7 If the giving of a decision without reasons was insufficient to achieve justice then reasons should be required, as also where the decision appeared aberrant.

8 The following factors were in favour of requiring reasons: (a) that giving reasons concentrated the decision-maker's mind on the right questions and demonstrated to the recipient that that was so, (b) it also showed that the issues had been conscientiously addressed and how the result had been reached, (c) alternatively, it alerted the recipient to a justiciable flaw in the process.

9 The following factors were against the requirement of reasons: (a) it might place an undue burden on decision-makers, (b) demand an appearance of unanimity where there was diversity, (c) call for articulation of sometimes inexpressible value judgments and (d) offer an invitation to the captious to comb the reasons for previously unsuspected grounds of challenge.

10 Although fairness might favour a requirement for reasons there might be outweighing considerations of public interest.

11 The giving of reasons would not be required if the procedures of the particular decision-maker would be frustrated by their being required.

Applying those principles, his Lordship answered in the affirmative the question: did fairness require here that reasons should have been given as to why the court (a) reached the conclusion that there was no causal connection between the anti-malarial drug and the applicant's behaviour and (b) decided that the sentence of imprisonment was required, rather than a lesser sentence which would not have had the same dire consequences for the applicant?

He rejected the public interest reasons relied on by Mr Eadie who had drawn analogies with other judicial bodies such as a jury or justices in reaching their verdicts in criminal cases.

His Lordship accepted Miss Montgomery's submissions that those bodies were not analogous because in the case of a jury the Court of Appeal, Criminal Division, might be asked to decide whether a conviction was safe and therefore there would be reasons at some stage of the process, and in the case of justices, because (a) a convicted defendant had a right of appeal to the crown court which was expected to give reasons, or (b) an by way of case stated was available.

It was unnecessary to decide whether the confirming officer and the reviewing authorities should have given reasons. There was much force in the argument that they should have done so on the present facts and the new rules imposed a requirement to do so on the reviewing authorities.

It was not to be thought that failure to give reasons would normally result in the quashing of a post-conviction determination of fact, a sentence or the review of a sentence. Much would depend on the circumstances of each case.

Judicial review was unlikely to succeed where the reasons were easily discernible albeit not expressed or where no other conclusion than that reached was realistically possible.

The Lord Chief Justice delivered a concurring judgment.

Solicitors: Redfern & Stigant, Chatham; Treasury Solicitor.

Stay available on waiving time bar

Baghlaf Al Safer Factory Co BR for Industry Ltd v Pakistan National Shipping Company and Another

Before Lord Justice Phillips, Lord Justice Waller and Lord Justice Chadwick

[Judgment December 11]

In the context of an exclusive jurisdiction clause in a bill of lading, where a plaintiff had acted reasonably in commencing proceedings in England and in allowing time to expire in the agreed foreign jurisdiction, a stay of the English proceedings should only be granted on terms that the defendant waived the time bar in the foreign jurisdiction.

The Court of Appeal so stated, inter alia, in a reserved judgment when allowing the appeal by shipowners, Pakistan National Shipping Co, against a decision of Judge Kershaw, QC, sitting as a judge of the Commercial Court on January 3, 1997, to dismiss their application for a stay of proceedings brought by cargo owners seeking to recover damages for breach of contract of carriage.

The bills of lading contained an exclusive jurisdiction clause which provided for the contract to be governed by the law of the place where the carrier had his principal place of business, Pakistan, and disputes determined at that place.

Mr Timothy Young, QC and Mr Arshad Ghaffar for the shipowners; Mr Michael Nolan for the cargo owners.

LORD JUSTICE PHILLIPS said that of general significance was the question where a claim relating to carriage of goods by sea had become time-barred in what would otherwise be the appropriate or agreed jurisdiction in which it should be tried, did that militate in favour of granting a stay of the English proceedings, or against granting a stay, or was it a neutral factor?

There was no binding decision on the point and different judges had expressed different views. The authorities had been reviewed in the Commercial Court involving exclusive foreign jurisdiction clauses in bills of lading: see *Citi-March Ltd v Neptune Orient Lines* ([1997] 1 Lloyd's Rep 72) and *The MC Pearl* ([1997] 1 Lloyd's Rep 556).

In the latter case Mr Justice Rix was not able to envisage a situation in which it might be reasonable to start proceedings in England in disregard of a foreign jurisdiction clause, but where the plaintiffs would be unable subsequently to demonstrate that there was strong cause for proceeding in England.

Accordingly he did not believe that Lord Goff's speech in *The Spiliada* ([1987] 1 AC 460, 483) could apply in the context of an exclusive jurisdiction clause.

His Lordship considered that the demands of practical justice identified by Lord Goff could in some circumstances apply to an exclusive jurisdiction clause context.

Where a plaintiff had acted reasonably in commencing proceedings in England and in allowing time to expire in the agreed foreign jurisdiction, a stay of the English proceedings should only be granted on terms that the defendant waived the time bar in the foreign jurisdiction.

In his Lordship's judgment factors existed in the case which, when viewed objectively, made it reasonable for the cargo owners to commence proceedings in England. The effect of the jurisdiction clause in the bill of lading was that the cargo owners were required to sue in a jurisdiction where the shipowners would have been entitled to limit their liability to a fraction of the claim. It was only by suing in England that the cargo owners compelled the shipowners to waive that limit.

In his Lordship's judgment, where a bill of lading contained a foreign jurisdiction clause whose effect would be to limit the holder's claim to a sum that was less than an applicable Hague-Visby Rules limit, the English court should normally treat the holder as entitled to disregard that clause unless and until the shipowner undertook that he would not seek to take advantage of the lower limit.

The stay would be granted subject to the shipowners undertaking to waive the time limit in Pakistan.

Lord Justice Waller and Lord Justice Chadwick agreed.

Solicitors: More Fisher Brown, Aldgate; Swinnerton Ashley Claydon & Co.

House of Lords

No abuse to court-martial civilian

Regina v Martin (Alan)

Before Lord Browne-Wilkinson, Lord Slynn of Hadley, Lord Lloyd of Berwick, Lord Hope of Craighead and Lord Clyde

[Speeches December 16]

It had not been an abuse of process for a civilian aged 19 to be tried on a murder charge by court-martial in Germany, where the alleged offence had been committed, rather than by judge and jury in England.

The House of Lords dismissed an appeal by Alan Martin from the Courts-Martial Appeal Court (Lord Bingham of Cornhill, Lord Chief Justice, Mr Justice Owen and Mr Justice Connell) who on July 30, 1996 had dismissed his appeal against conviction.

Lord Thomas of Gresford, QC and Mr Gilbert Blades, solicitor, for Mr Martin; Mr Philip Havers, QC and Mr Neill Stewart for the Crown.

LORD LLOYD said that Mr Martin, then aged 17, had been charged with the murder of Vanessa Marie Chappell. It was not suggested that there had been any irregularity in the conduct of the court-martial proceedings, nor that the prosecution had acted in bad faith or with impropriety.

What was suggested was that Mr Martin should not have been tried by court-martial at all: he should have been tried in England before a judge and jury pursuant to section 9 of the Offences against the Person Act 1861.

At the time of the murder he had been living with his family in Germany where his father, an army corporal, was serving with the British Forces. While in Germany he had been subject to military law: Army Act 1955, section 209 and Schedule 5, paragraph 5. He had been correctly charged in Germany with having committed the civil offence of murder contrary to section 70 of the Act.

The officer appointed to act as his commanding officer had decided to refer the case to higher authority, under section 79(1) as amended by section 3(5) of the Army Act 1981, with a view to his being tried by court-martial, and the prescribed steps had been taken under section 79(3).

In the meantime Corporal Martin had been posted to England, and Mr Martin had subsequently been returned to England so as to be near his family. On Corporal Martin's return to England, Mr Martin would ordinarily have ceased to be subject to military law, but by section 131 he remained subject to it in respect of offences committed while in Germany provided that his trial started within six months or the consent of the Attorney-General was obtained: section 132(3A), as substituted by section 6(3) of the 1981 Act.

That consent had subsequently been given, it having been explained to the Attorney-General that the trial was to take place in Germany since many of the witnesses were German and could not be subpoenaed to attend a trial in England.

Lord Thomas submitted that the trial of a young civilian by court-martial was inherently unfair and oppressive. Instead of Mr Martin being tried by a jury of his peers, the court-martial would consist of five senior officers and two civilians. The atmosphere would be very different from that of an English court and there was a risk that Mr Martin might not do himself justice.

In particular, it was unfair and oppressive, it was submitted, that he should have been returned to stand trial in Germany after many months in England and after his father had ceased to be subject to military law. He could only be convicted in England by a majority of at least ten to two, whereas a simple majority sufficed in a trial by court-martial.

His Lordship agreed with Lord Thomas that the categories of abuse of process were never closed, but the decisive factor in the present case was that Parliament had itself approved trial by court-martial as a mode of trial appropriate for civilians in certain circumstances, and for juveniles charged with murder: see section 71A of the 1955 Act, inserted by section 10(1) of the Armed Forces Act 1976.

Since the procedure had been approved by Parliament, it seemed obvious that the carrying out of the procedure could not of itself be categorised as an abuse of process.

Lord Thomas said that Mr Martin's commanding officer ought to have exercised his power under section 77A, inserted by section 3(3) of the 1981 Act, to stay the court-martial proceedings "in the interests of the better administration of justice" so as to allow Mr Martin to be tried in England. But it was not enough that he ought to have stayed them: it had to be shown that his failure to do so had been an abuse of process.

Lord Thomas relied on *R v Horseferry Road Magistrates' Court, Ex parte Bennett* ([1994] AC 42, 62) per Lord Griffiths, but the facts of that case were remote from those of the present.

It could not possibly be said that the decision not to stay proceedings by court-martial in Germany, where the crime had been committed, had been contrary to the rule of law or deprived Mr Martin of any of his basic human rights.

Nor could it be said to have been "something so unfair and wrong" (*Hui Chi-Ming v The Queen* ([1992] 1 AC 34, 57, per Lord Lowry) that the courts ought to intervene.

The commanding officer's decision had been fully open to him under a procedure prescribed by Parliament. It might have been the wrong decision. Their Lordships did not know enough to say. But it had not been an abuse of process, or anything like it.

The same applied to the decision of the higher authority not to refer the case back to the commanding officer with a direction to stay and to the decision of the Attorney-General to grant his consent.

Even if the Courts-Martial Appeal Court had been satisfied that there had been an abuse of process, it would have had to dismiss the appeal unless persuaded that the conviction was unsafe. Nothing in such material as was before the House of Lords made his Lordship think that it was.

Lord Browne-Wilkinson agreed with Lord Lloyd.

LORD SLYNN, also agreeing, said that as a matter of first impression it had seemed to him disturbing and indeed wrong in principle that a civilian aged 19, who had with his father returned to England more than a year before trial, should have been sent back to Germany for trial by court-martial and thereby been deprived of the right, or at least of the opportunity, of trial by jury.

It was, however, clear that Parliament had provided for a court-martial to be held in the circumstances of the case and it had not been shown that there had been any breach of the rules or any abuse of process entitling the Courts-Martial Appeal Court or the House of Lords to interfere.

In addition, weight had to be given to the fact that it seemed that there would have been great difficulty in having the evidence of at any rate some of the crucial German witnesses before the English civilian court; trial somewhere there clearly had had to be.

Accordingly, and despite his anxiety about the case, his Lordship agreed that for the reasons given by Lord Lloyd the appeal should be dismissed.

Lord Hope and Lord Clyde delivered opinions concurring in dismissing the appeal.

Solicitors: Mr Gilbert Blades, Lincoln; Director of Army Legal Services.

Penalty for unnecessary costs

Burrows v Vauxhall Motors Ltd

Mongiardi v IBC Vehicles Ltd

Where county court costs were unnecessarily incurred as the result of the premature issue of proceedings in personal injury actions when liability was not in issue, the taxing officer retained the power under Order 62, rule 10(1) of the Rules of the Supreme Court to disallow costs or order a party at fault to pay to the other party his costs occasioned by any act done or omission made unreasonably or improperly.

On acceptance by the plaintiff of a payment into court, the action was stayed under Order 11, rule 3(3) of the County Court Rules (SI 1981 No 1678 L20). By Order 38, rules 1, 3 and 19A the county court could not exercise the power conferred by Order 62, rule 10(1) of the Rules of the Supreme Court after the granting of a stay, except on taxation when the taxing officer retained that power.

The Court of Appeal (Lord Woolf, Master of the Rolls, Lord Justice Phillips and Lord Justice Chadwick) so held on November 19, giving guidelines on two appeals in personal injury cases in which the defendants' insurers wished if possible to settle the claims but county court summonses were issued before they had had time to consider medical reports.

In each case after seeing those reports the defendants made payments into court which the plaintiffs accepted.

Aggravated burglary offence

Regina v Klass

Before Lord Justice Mantell, Mr Justice Hooper and Judge Michael Walker

[Judgment November 27]

To commit an offence of aggravated burglary contrary to section 10 of the Theft Act 1968, a person must have with him a weapon of offence at the time of entry. The offence could not be committed if the weapon was not being carried by one of the people effecting entry to the building.

The Court of Appeal, Criminal Division, so held in allowing an appeal by Kennedy Francis Klass against his conviction in January 1997 at Chelmsford Crown Court (Mr Recorder Parkins, QC) of aggravated burglary for which he was sentenced to three years detention in a young offender institution.

Section 9 of the Theft Act 1968 provides: "(1) A person is guilty of burglary if — (a) he enters any building … as a trespasser and with intent to commit any … offence … [such as] stealing anything in the building…"

Section 10 provides: "(1) A person is guilty of aggravated burglary if he commits any burglary and at the time has with him … any weapon of offence … and for this purpose — … (b) 'weapon of offence' means any article made or adapted for use for causing injury to or incapacitating a person…"

Mr John C. Barker, assigned by the Registrar of Criminal Appeals, for the appellant; Miss Susannah Farr for the Crown.

MR JUSTICE HOOPER, giving the judgment of the court, said that the appellant and two other men, one of whom had a piece of pole in his hand, wrenched open the door of a caravan and demanded money of the occupant who told them he did not have any. The man with the pole then hit the occupant of the caravan over the head and pursued him as he ran away, hitting him repeatedly.

When the appellant was subsequently arrested he admitted being outside the caravan but denied entering it, although his fingerprints were found on a worktop inside. He said that when he saw the victim being hit he and the third man ran away.

On the appeal, the question of law raised was whether the offence of aggravated burglary could be committed if the weapon was not being carried by the burglar or one of the burglars who entered the building.

Assuming there was only one weapon and that weapon was with the person on the outside, that person committed burglary if he was aiding and abetting the burglary being committed by the person effecting entry.

A strict interpretation of section 10 would therefore lead to the conclusion that both could be convicted of aggravated burglary. However, the gravamen of the offence was entry into the building with a weapon.

The purpose of section 10 was to deter people from taking weapons into buildings and other people's house while committing burglary. The fact that a getaway driver had a weapon with him in the car would not, in their Lordships' judgment, be sufficient to turn an offence of burglary into one of aggravated burglary. Although there were certain academic attractions in the strict interpretation, the purposive approach was to be preferred.

In the circumstances, the conviction of aggravated burglary had to be quashed. Relying on section 3 of the Criminal Appeal Act 1968, a conviction for burglary would be substituted and the sentence would be reduced to two years detention.

Solicitors: Crown Prosecution Service, Chelmsford.

No notice of fraud

Turkiye IS Bankasi AS v Bank of China

Counter-guarantees given by one bank to another were enforceable unless the bank which issued the guarantees had notice of clear fraud.

The Court of Appeal (Lord Justice Hirst, Lord Justice Swinton Thomas and Lord Justice Mantell) so held on November 5 dismissing an appeal by the defendant against a decision of Mr Justice Waller in the Commercial Court (*The Times* March 8, 1996) enforcing certain counter-guarantees made to the plaintiff.

LORD JUSTICE HIRST said the judge had held that the only basis on which the defendant could resile from payment under the counter-guarantees was where there was clear fraud of which the defendant had notice: *Edward Owen Engineering Ltd v Barclays Bank International Ltd* ([1978] 1 QB 159). That was the correct test which the judge had applied.

Correction

In *Montgomery v Sabella Ltd* (*The Times* December 15), the solicitors for the appellant landlord were Goldkorn Davies Mathias.

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CHRIS WARD

Poaching bosses is acceptable, but tempers flare when secretaries are lured away by rival firms, writes **Susan MacDonald**

Headhunters target top legal staff

The battles between law firms to poach each other's finest brains — and their clients who change companies with them — is well known. Not only does it go on throughout Britain but also across the Atlantic as UK and American law firms headhunt each other's top and up-and-coming lawyers.

But now the shortage of top legal secretaries means that they, too, are being poached. The system is the same as for their bosses — but what is sauce for the goose is not necessarily sauce for the gander.

"Bosses will see headhunting among lawyers as normal practice but will go mad if an approach is made to their secretaries," says *Kevin Hibbert, chief executive of* Capital Legal Associates, the legal secretary recruitment agency. "So what we do is to take our top clients to Ladies' Day at Ascot, and as we entertain them we ask them two questions. We say: 'If we took your secretary away from you, would you stop being our client?' And 'If we found you a good secretary, would you take her on even though you knew she had been headhunted?' If the answer to both these questions is yes, we set up a 'hands off' policy, agreeing that we will take from others but not from their firm."

Capital Legal Associates, part of Abacus recruitment, is based in London but has recently opened an office in Leeds and is planning offices for Manchester and Birmingham. It has started headhunting top secretaries through its database, based on information from colleagues or those it has placed in a job.

When, for instance, a client is in urgent need of a marine litigation secretary, the agency telephones the best candidate. "We start by saying 'you won't know us but you have been highly recommended . . . Usually the immediate answer *is 'not interested', but* by the time we have finished describing the job and the increase in salary, she will ask for more information."

Helen Dunn was headhunted by Nabarro Nathanson. "It was quite an ego boost," she says

If a secretary agrees to change, she is unlikely to inform her boss that she has been headhunted, according to Mr Hibbert. Usually, she will do this only if she has refused the job. "We received an angry call from one boss who had been told we had approached his secretary," says Mr Hibbert. "He told me never to do it again. I pointed out that he had acquired most of his lawyers through headhunting and asked why he thought that secretaries were not worth the same treatment."

Although some firms are slow to modernise, legal secretarial work is changing. Typing speeds are no longer essential for firms that have their own word-processing departments. The secretaries, who are sure to be snapped up, are those with an Association of Legal Secretaries certificate (a two-year college course) and A-level law, Mr Hibbert says. One large law firm takes 22 secretaries a year straight from college. Then they should be able to use packages such as PowerPoint and Excel in addition to a word-processing package, have *excellent* organisational skills and be flexible in their working hours. In return, salaries and bonuses are on the increase.

Virginia Hanberry recruits for the international American *law* firm Squire Sanders & Dempsey. There is such a shortage of top secretaries, she says, that firms are now offering interim increases and above average bonuses to prevent their secretaries from leaving at the start of the year, when lots of secretaries do.

"I have spent a frantic year trying to recruit good-calibre *secretaries and* we have been forced to bring secretaries from our American offices to work in London. The average salary for a top legal PA in London is about £24,000," she says.

In fact the legal secretary recruitment sector has become so busy that Ms Hanberry has decided to leave her firm in January to set up as a recruitment specialist for the 200 American law firms in Britain. Helen Dunn, 36, has been in the legal sector nearly ten years *and was headhunted for the London* West End firm of Nabarro Nathanson earlier this year. "It was quite an ego boost that someone appreciated me so much. I was asked if I would be manager of a word-processing and proof-reading *department*.

"At first I said no, because I wanted to move upwards, not sideways, but was assured that this would be promotion. So then I started asking the questions. It turned out to be Nabarro — and I love it here," she says.

Sandra Parris, 33, agrees that there is now a shortage of good secretaries. She has worked in the sector for 13 years and said that this shortage means that the smaller firms in London are losing out. She says the secretarial turnover is increasing. Medium-sized firms find that with the salaries they can afford they cannot replace those who leave with secretaries of the same ability. "So in some smaller firms secretarial standards are falling," she says.

One secretary, who finally decided to leave the legal sector after 14 years, did so when she was sent for an interview with a firm where secretaries worked screened off from each other by individual partitions. "I felt like a battery hen," she says.

- We apologise for the technical error *in last* week's article which caused some paragraphs to be printed out of sequence.

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Great escape from the good life

Many city folk dream of fleeing the jams, noise and pollution for a quiet life in the country. But is it any less stressful?

A REPORT from the Rural Development Commission on England's 9,000 parishes shows that rural districts have few local facilities and services.
Some 29 per cent of parishes lack a pub, 42 per cent have no permanent shop, 49 per cent no schools, 83 per cent no doctor, and 92 per cent no police station.
With depleted public transport services (75 per cent of parishes have no daily bus services), cars are increasingly the only form of transport available to rural residents.
Chirpy city types might think that on moving to remote country areas they can walk or ride to the station or into town, as if they were characters in a Thomas Hardy novel. But again, the reality often proves disheartening. Country roads and lanes are sometimes not the quiet and safe byways they once were.
Richard Simmonds, the chairman of the Countryside Commission, says that on many rural roads it is no longer safe to walk, cycle, push a pram or ride a horse. Here EMMA MAHONY tells how her dream of living in the country turned sour and why she and her family returned to the city.

ANDREW HASSON

Goodbye to the country: Emma and Adam with son Humphrey outside the converted Victorian stable block, which has eight rooms and a walled garden

Last weekend, we packed our final box and set off back to the city. The rural idyll was over. We had spent 18 months in a village called Plumpton in East Sussex, and acquired a baby, an au pair and an alarming number of debts.

Our decision to move to Plumpton had been spontaneous. It was April and we were stuck renting a studio flat in Fulham after our offer on a flat had been gazumped. We had already moved three times since our marriage and were fed up with the fickleness of the London property market and having to flounce into the bathroom after a row (it was the only other room in the flat).

Dreaming of a summer out of the traffic and fumes, we spent a weekend with a friend in the country. On a walk, he pointed to a converted Victorian stable block that was available to rent. Within two weeks we were back, humming appreciatively at the eight rooms and magnificent walled garden. A month later we moved in.

We were lucky. In May 1996 country rentals were experiencing a boom greater than that of London, so we were fortunate to find somewhere so fast. At the time, Strutt and Parker in Lewes, the nearest town, had 1,000 applicants on its books looking for similar properties.

A survey from the estate agents Hamptons reports that the number of applicants wanting to rent in the country doubled last year, and that 36 per cent were people who wished to buy but were renting as a stopgap because of a shortage of property.

A further 9 per cent were identified as preferring London, but had opted to rent in the country because they could not find anything decent to rent in town. Falling somewhere between these statistical stools, we wished for a change of scene.

The first summer was glorious. The weather was hot and friends from the city came down at weekends. We spent lazy days playing tennis, going for walks and feeding the chickens. My husband, Adam, and I were both self-employed at the time, so we took the train to London only a few days a week, while communicating with our offices by home computer.

> 'The first summer was glorious. It was hot and friends from the city came down at weekends'

Then my husband was offered a job in London, and the nightmare of the daily trek to the city began. Commuting killed our dream. Plumpton was one hour's journey to Victoria, but driving to the station and taking the Tube at the other end stretched the travelling time to two hours each way.

Even before Connex South Central took over the line, shortening the number of carriages and lengthening the amount of time spent waiting on the platform, the strain began to show.

First there was the business of getting to the station. By the time Humphrey was born we had only one car, so at 7am each morning I had to load the baby into the car to get my husband to work, and employ a babysitter at 8pm each evening so that I could drive to the station again to pick him up.

Then there was the expense. Our excited back-of-an-envelope calculations had not included train fares. It is one thing to give up a flat at £650 a month in Fulham for a house at £750 near Brighton, but £400 in train fares needs to be added to the rent. And there is no question of being without a car in the country.

Our bills were greater on a larger house. We paid our electricity bill regularly but still had one for £850 on leaving, while our water bill, negligible in a London flat, was hundreds of pounds on a private estate.

After an offer from a friend to rent a flat back in London, we decided to cut our losses and run. A week later, the difference in having the family together for an extra four hours each day outweighs all the greenery that the country can offer. But Humphrey will miss the chickens.

A wildlife oasis just a bird cry from the city

Some houses offer such a peaceful, secluded oasis close to the city centre that their owners get the best of both worlds — a country feel in the middle of town.

Kevin and Judy Kane's Regency home, Spring Cottage, Edgbaston, is just over a mile from Birmingham city centre. The house, on sale for £750,000, faces a huge pond, and its two acres of mature gardens are a haven for wildlife.

The couple have seen foxes, hedgehogs, owls, sparrowhawks, a kingfisher and even an otter.

"We used to have a weekend cottage in the Lake District, but it was quite tying," says Mrs Kane. "Some people who visit us say it's quieter here than in the countryside because we don't get the motorbike scramblers and light aircraft that they do."

Her husband adds: "We didn't make enough use of the weekend cottage. We were using it only six times a year, and when we got there we'd be mowing lawns or doing repairs. When you've got a house like this you don't need a retreat. Our friends loved coming here and sitting in the gardens. But now I'm retired from my work as a property developer and our children have fled the nest, it's a bit big for two of us."

The five-bedroom house, which has a guest suite plus a former coach house that is now a cottage, is on the market with Knight Frank (01789 297735).

Another Edgbaston property, Beadle's Cottage, has also seen the city grow around it since it was built around 1700. Now for sale at £395,000 through Robert Powell (0121-454 6930), the cottage is named after the beadle who kept things in order for the nearby church. It has four bedrooms, four reception rooms, and a garden fringed with trees so one can forget that the city is just two miles away.

Knight Frank is also marketing Pinnerwood House at Pinner, Middlesex, 15 miles from Central London but surrounded by protected countryside and with two acres of grounds, including a tennis court and swimming pool. The property, just over a mile from Pinner station and about seven miles from the M1 and M25, is priced at £900,000 (01494 675368).

The agent is also selling 85 Deodar Road, Putney, which has a 100ft garden that runs down to a patio on the edge of the Thames.

Putney Tube is a brief trot across a footbridge that spans the river, and the house is opposite the Hurlingham Club. The asking price is £950,000 (Tel 0171-824 8171).

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SPORTS POLITICS

Funding methods may lead to exodus of competitors

By John Goodbody

NATIONAL Lottery funding for many of Britain's elite competitors is being held up because of bureaucracy, including the complicated form-filling needed to get the money for training and taking part in international events.

The issue will be raised when the House of Lords debates the National Lottery bill tomorrow with finance still not reaching a large number of athletes due to take part in the Winter Olympics.

Some sportsmen and women are seeking to represent Wales and Scotland in future rather than England, because lottery funding, announced in November 1996, is often more generous and more easily obtained.

Nigel Hook, of the Central Council of Physical Recreation (CCPR), which represents the national governing bodies, said yesterday: "While sport welcomes the additional money, it also recognises the need to unravel some of the procedures surrounding the distribution of lottery money. A lot of bodies have expressed their dismay at the current practice."

Craig Reedie, the chairman of the British Olympic Association (BOA), has spoken of the process being "unnecessarily bureaucratic and cumbersome", pointing out that there is no sense in the four home country sports councils having entirely different distribution systems for revenue applications operated under identical legislation.

Mike Jardine, the chief executive of the British Ski Federation, said that English skiers have not had any money towards preparing for the Olympics in February. "In fact, because we had no world-class performance plan accepted, the British team were denied places to train at the national sports centre at Lilleshall."

He warned that Sophie Ormond, 17, "the most outstanding female prospect for years" and ranked in the top ten in the world this year, is training with the French team and may change nationality when she is 18.

In judo, Britain's most successful sport for the size of the team over the past seven Olympics, no funding will be forthcoming until January 25, although backdated to November 1.

Lesley-Anne Alexander, who chairs the British Judo Association, said the governing body did not have the administrative capacity "for producing a document quickly for the world-class performance plan".

"However, the Sports Council has not facilitated the process. In addition, the fighters' ability to get money is directly dependent on their ability to fill in forms and this is a fairly alien activity to some of them."

Triathlon has also had problems in completing the plan, which will now be heard in February. In the meantime, Ceris Gilfillan, an outstanding English prospect for the 2002 Commonwealth Games in Manchester, has switched to Wales, where funding has been easier to obtain.

In weightlifting, there has been the anomaly of 22-year-old twins, Tommy and Stuart Yule. Tommy, who is studying engineering science at Oxford University, is ranked second in Britain in the 108 kgs class. He gets no lottery support. Stuart has just graduated in science from Edinburgh University. He is ranked fourth in Britain in the 99 kgs class and is receiving £3,000 from the Scottish Sports Council. Tommy said: "It is a bit strange. I just have to rely on the generosity of my parents."

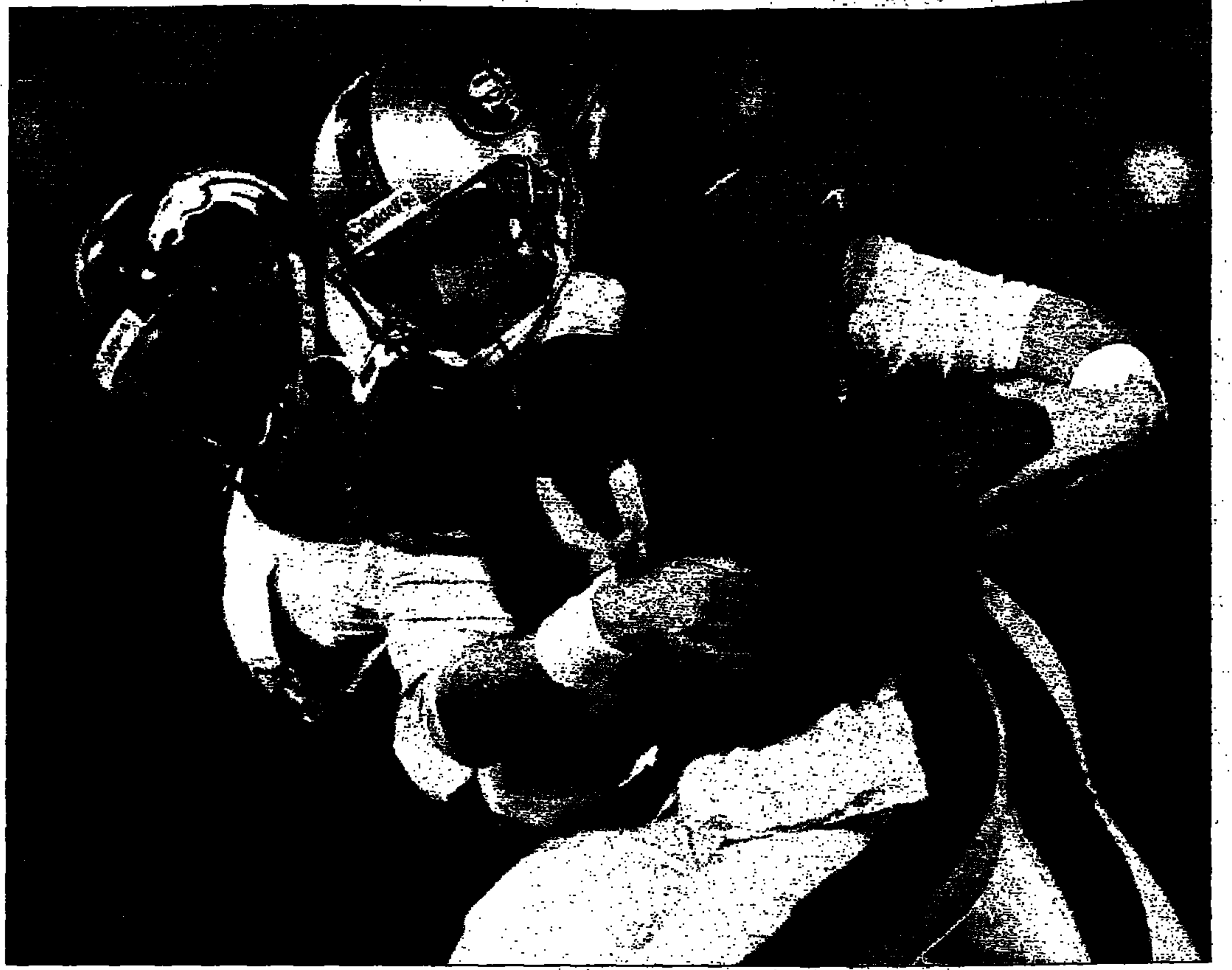
A spokesman for the English Sports Council said yesterday: "This funding has been a tremendous success. In a year, 24 organisations have been told they are being funded or already have been funded. We are taking sport to another level. We are not just involved in short-term gains."

"As a public body we have to be accountable for public funds and therefore we need to take precautions to see that money is properly spent."

He pointed out that British sport has already benefited, with the national rowing team publicly praising the support after their success at the 1997 world championships.

Tommy Yule, the weightlifter, trains in his garage

PAUL SAKUMA


Steve Young, the San Francisco 49ers quarterback, is sacked by Alfred Williams, the Denver Broncos tight end, during their match on Monday night. The 49ers had the last word, winning 34-17. Both teams have qualified for the National Football League play-offs

SWIMMING

Three Russians suspended

By Craig Lord

THREE Russian swimmers have been suspended for two years for testing positive to an anabolic steroid after Fina, the sport's international governing body, yesterday turned down their appeals.

Vladimir Pyshnenko, Olga Kochetkova and Natalia Mecheryakova, all medal-winners at the European championships in August, had used metandienone metabolites. The punishments are backdated to October 18, when the trio were tested at a training camp in Cyprus.

A fourth member of the Russia squad, Alexei Koleshnikov, was suspended for three months for taking cannabis.

His suspension begins on January 1, excluding him from the world championships in Perth, Australia, and most of the World Cup series.

Had all four swimmers tested positive for steroids, Russia could have faced suspension from all international competition for four years — including the Olympic Games in Sydney in 2000.

Fina has the power to impose such a penalty, under a rule introduced last year, if its testers detect four steroid users from one nation.

[This does not apply if steroid users are detected by their own member federation, although it could be enforced if a federation attempted a cover-up].

Pyshnenko, 27, a member of the world record breaking 4 x 200 metres freestyle team that won the Olympic title in Barcelona in 1992, Mecheryakova, 25, the European 50 metres freestyle champion, and Kochetkova, 18, a European Championships medley relay silver medal-winner, claimed that cake they had eaten had been spiked.

Fina shied away from its full powers: its rules allow it to impose a four-year suspension on each of the steroid cases.

A fifth swimmer, Olena Lapunova, of the Ukraine, was provisionally suspended, pending a hearing, for using the same steroid.

There have now been 31 positive steroid cases in swimming during the Nineties — 23 of them from China.

SPORT IN BRIEF

Record turn-out forecast

■ **OLYMPIC GAMES:** At least 71 countries will be represented in Nagano, Japan, in February organisers say, making the 1998 Winter Games the biggest so far, beating the 67 countries who registered at Lillehammer, Norway in 1994. Kenya is the latest addition to the list and some 82 national Olympic committees have expressed a wish to take part, although a number of these are unlikely to be able to meet the minimum qualification standards laid down.

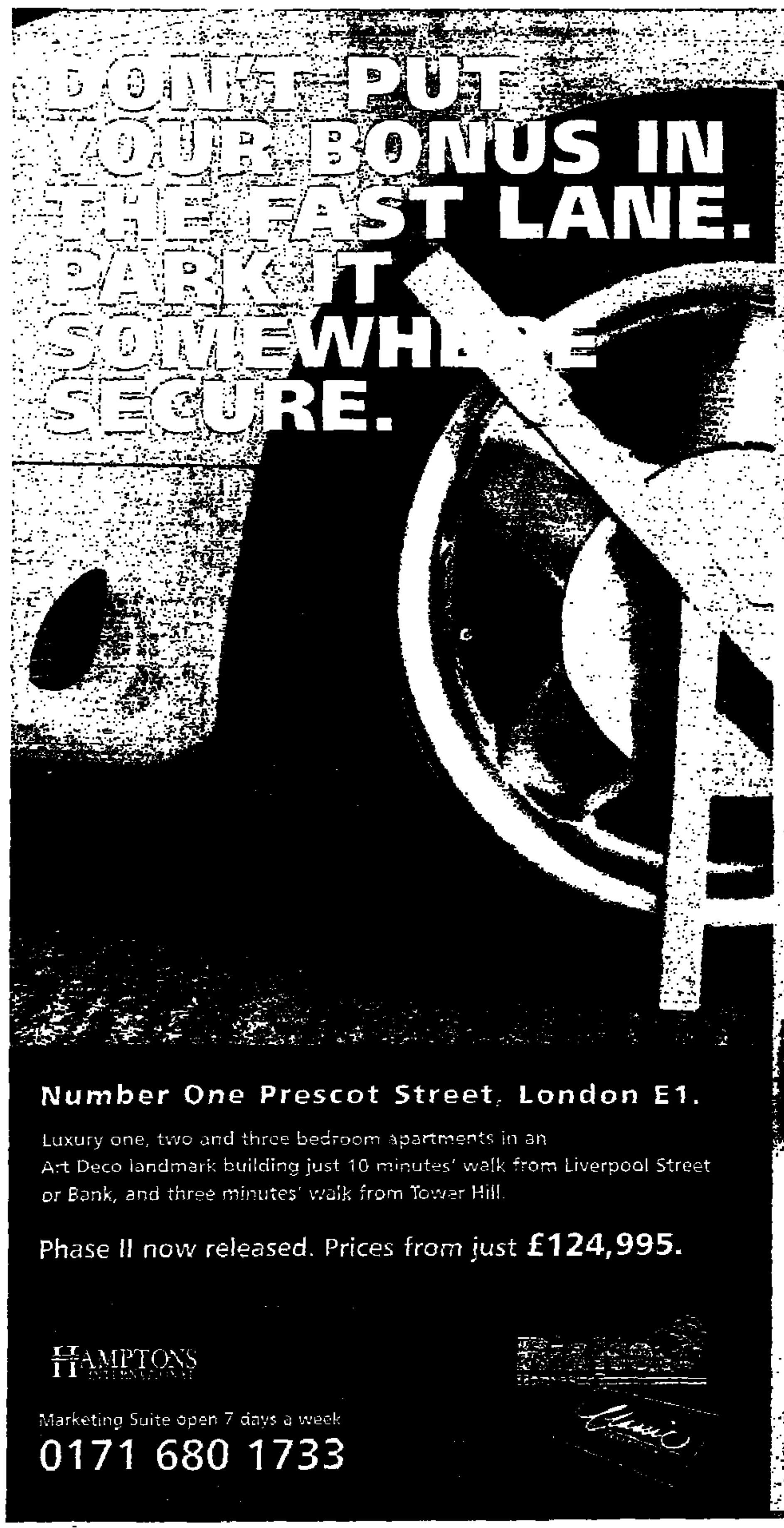
Brazil reach semi-finals

■ **FOOTBALL:** Brazil claimed a Confederations' Cup semi-final place with a 3-2 win over Mexico in Riyadh yesterday. Brazil finished top of group A with Australia, beaten 1-0 by Saudi Arabia, second to also reach the last four. Mexico needed a draw to qualify and substitute Ramon Ramirez's goal a minute from time set up a thrilling finale.

ECB chooses Lilleshall

■ **CRICKET:** The national £10-million centre of excellence is likely to be built at Lilleshall. The England and Wales Cricket Board has confirmed the West Midlands site as its favoured venue for the National Cricket Centre which, it is hoped, will be the coaching headquarters for players of all ages, from youngsters right through to the Test squad.

NEW HOMES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LEGAL & PUBLIC NOTICES

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LEGAL NOTICES

ELMORE Limited

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It is not intended to propose any resolutions at the meeting concerning Liquidators remuneration, however the meeting may receive information about, or be called upon to approve, the costs of preparing the statement of affairs and convening the meeting.

A list of names and addresses of the above company's creditors can be inspected at the offices of Leonard Curtis & Co, PO Box 553, 30 Eastbourne Terrace, (2nd Floor), London W2 6LF, between the hours of 10.00am to 4.00pm on the two business days preceding the Meeting of Creditors.

DATED THIS 3rd December 1997

[illegible] Berger - Director

No. 05133 of 1997

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE

CHANCERY DIVISION

COMPANIES COURT

IN THE MATTER OF LONDON BRIDGE SOFTWARE HOLDINGS PLC

AND IN THE MATTER OF THE COMPANIES ACT 1985

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Order of the High Court of Justice (Chancery Division) dated 12 November 1997 confirming the reduction of the capital of the above-named Company from £3,975,000 to £1,560,000 and the reduction of the share premium account of the Company by £4,575,000 together with the Minute approved by the Court showing with respect to the capital of the Company as altered the several particulars required by the above-mentioned Act were registered by the Registrar of Companies on 3 December 1997.

DATED this 10th day of December 1997.

Travers Smith Braithwaite

10 Snow Hill, London EC1A 2AL

Solicitors for the Company.

The Print Cupboard Limited

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN pursuant to Section 98 of the Insolvency Act 1986, that a meeting of the creditors of the above named company will be held at the offices of Leonard Curtis & Co, situated at 30 Eastbourne Terrace, (2nd Floor), London W2 6LF, on 31st December 1997 at 10.30am for the purposes provided in Section 98 et seq. It is not intended to propose any resolutions at the meeting concerning Liquidators remuneration, however the meeting may receive information about, or be called upon to approve, the costs of preparing the statement of affairs and convening the meeting. A list of names and addresses of the above company's creditors can be inspected at the offices of Leonard Curtis & Co, PO Box 553, 30 Eastbourne Terrace, (2nd Floor), London W2 6LF, between the hours of 10.00am to 4.00pm on the two business days preceding the Meeting of Creditors.

DATED THIS 11th December 1997

A. Moore - Director

GAMING ACT 1968

TAKE NOTICE that on the 16th day of December 1997 application was made to the Gaming Licensing Committee for the Petty Sessional Division of South Westminster in the Inner London Area for the grant of a Licence under the Gaming Act 1968 in accordance with the following particulars: Name of applicant: Aspinalls Club Limited. Name of Club: Aspinalls. Location of premises: Aspinalls (whole building) 27-28 Curzon Street and 16/18 Market Mews, London W1.

The application is for a licence other than a bingo club licence. Any person who desires to object to the grant of the Licence should send to the Clerk to the said Gaming Licensing Committee, Horseferry Road Magistrates Court, Horseferry Road, London SW1 before the first day of January 1998 two copies of a brief statement in writing of the grounds of his objection.

POSSIBLE BENEFICIARIES

Would Harriet Mary (Essie) nee Cocks, Charles Cocks, Annie nee Cocks, Margaret (Daisy) nee Cocks, Kate (Kitty) nee Cocks, Herbert Dawson Cocks (children of Thomas Cocks and Mary Ann Cocks nee Kidd), Walter James Costello, Annie Bagnall nee Costello (children of Michael Costello and Mary Josephine Costello nee Boyce) or Elsie Dora nee Cocks (child of Charles Cocks and Fannie Cocks nee Johnson) or Lily Mary nee Costello (child of Walter James Costello and Mary Ellen Costello nee Cleary) or their issue or any person knowing their whereabouts or claiming to be related to them or Edmund Joseph Walter Cocks deceased please contact The Public Trustee of Queensland, GPO Box 2251, Brisbane, Queensland, 4001 quoting reference E144-2270454 and provide full details of their claim.

Notice is hereby given on or after the 10 March 1998, the Public Trustee intends, pursuant to Section 132 of the Public Trustee Act 1978 to proceed to distribute the assets in the estate of Edmund Joseph Walter Cocks deceased late of Brisbane in the State of Queensland having regard only to the persons whose claims have been established to his satisfaction or who then appear to him to have the best claim in law.

M BROWNE

REGIONAL MANAGER

PUBLIC TRUST OFFICE

BRISBANE SOUTH REGION

No. 005761 of 1997

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE

CHANCERY DIVISION

COMPANIES COURT

IN THE MATTER OF IC INSURANCE LIMITED

and

IN THE MATTER OF THE COMPANIES ACT 1985

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Order of the High Court of Justice (Chancery Division) dated 10 December 1997 confirming the reduction of the capital of the above-named company from £75,000,000 to £20,000,000 and the Minute approved by the Court showing with respect to the capital of the said company as altered the several particulars required by the above-mentioned Act were registered by the Registrar of Companies on 12 December 1997.

Dated this 15 day of December 1997.

LINKLATERS & PAINES (JTL)

One Silk Street

London EC2Y 8HQ

Solicitors for the above named Company

A-Z CLEANCARE LIMITED

THE INSOLVENCY ACT 1986

In accordance with Rule 4.106 of The Insolvency Rules 1986 notice is hereby given that I, Peter S Dunn FCA, a Licensed Insolvency Practitioner of Horwath Clark Whitehill & Co, 7 Kenrick Place, London W1H 3FF, was appointed Liquidator of the above company by the Creditors on 9th December 1997.

DATED THIS 9TH DECEMBER 1997

Peter S Dunn FCA

Liquidator

The Insolvency Act 1986

BUNTERS PAPER EMPORIUM LIMITED

(In Liquidation)

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that I, K P Barry, FCA, of Leonard Curtis & Co, 30 Eastbourne Terrace, London W2 6LF was appointed Liquidator of the above named Company by the Members and Creditors on 10th December 1997.

Dated: 10th December 1997

K P BARRY, Liquidator

PUBLIC NOTICES

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Rhône-Alps
1 location, 2 buildings
about 3.060sq.m

SHOPPING CENTERS

South East
"Grand Var" Est TOULON
several condo-lots
(38.5%) about 4.491sq.m

LAND

Paris Region
2 locations, 252.804sq.m

West
1 location, 35.739sq.m

South East
3 locations, 237.268sq.m

East
2 locations, 169.555sq.m

OTHERS

Paris Region
1 restaurant in
commercial center

West
batches of offices in
commercial center

Rhône-Alps
1 building to renovate

For detailed information on all assets and to receive the schedule of "data room" organisation write:
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PARIS 1st FRANCE

هكذا من الأصل

Richard Evans assesses a report which advocates sweeping measures to encourage growth

Financial equation demands inventive solution

A revised draft of the financial plan for British racing, which proposes radical solutions to the funding problems highlighted last week by Sheikh Mohammed, went before the British Horseracing Board (BHB) yesterday.

The 54-page document, produced by a group chaired by Peter Savill, president of the Racehorse Owners' Association, is scheduled to be published *next month* — if the BHB can reach agreement. The causes of racing's financial plight will not surprise racing people; the same cannot be said of the likely reaction of politicians and public to the proposed solutions.

The report paints a familiar picture of the financial woes facing the sport. For every £100 of off-course betting turnover, £78 is returned to punters in winnings, £6.75 goes to the Government (in betting duty), £11.71 is taken by betting shop overheads, £2.35 goes in bookmaker profits — leaving £1.19 for racing via the levy.

The overhead cost of betting through 9,000 betting shops is by far the highest in the world, leaving too little money for racing and Government. For every pound racing receives from betting, the Government takes £5.67 — nearly double the amount in Australia and three times the ratio in France and South Africa.

The low percentage of betting turnover returned to racing — 1.19 per cent — "is at the root of most of British racing's financial problems," according to the report. Of the nine major racing nations, Britain lies eighth when comparing owners' return from prize-money with the cost of keeping a horse in training.

"Whichever aspect of racing is reviewed, the overwhelming picture emerges of a badly underfunded industry which is too dependent upon its heritage and the patronage of non-resident owners, which is failing to meet the needs of the market place."

Sheikh Mohammed's Gimcrack speech last week underlined that fragility, but the key difficulty the BHB will face is convincing politicians of why they should be concerned about racing's financial needs. Racing spends just £2.6m a year on marketing itself, compared to about £20m in France and the United States, and £139m in Japan. The blueprint argues for a marketing budget of £14.25m on the grounds that it would increase employment by 2,280, boost income by £25m and tax revenues by £5.8m, and attract 550 new owners. Walter Mitty would be impressed.

British owners recoup only 24 per cent of their keep and training costs and a target of a 50 per cent return to owners should be established. That would require £66m extra prize-money on top of the existing £59m.

Worthy targets abound, but who pays? Not the punter, who already contributes about £1bn a year via losing bets and betting duty, according to the BHB team. Nor the bookmaker, who would pass on the cost to the punter. Racing has "extremely limited" opportunities to raise more money. Which leaves the Government — in partnership with racing.

Here is the crux of the problem. Can the sport persuade a Government limiting cash for single parents and needs every penny for the National Health Service, to come to the rescue? Apparently, its leaders think they can.

The mathematics are simple. A reduction in betting duty from 6.75 per cent to 5 per cent, with the 1.75 per cent being transferred to the levy, would release £80m for racing, £17m for greyhounds, and £20m for bookmakers. Racing would generate an extra £25m through self-help, including sponsorship, copyright income, the Tote — and deregulation of racecourses to allow betting and amusement machines in "racing clubs".

The difficulty is believing the conclusions of a KPMG report produced for the BHB last month into the effect of doubling prize-money and boosting marketing. It sounds marvellous: racing income would increase by £188m (excluding extra levy from increased betting), 9,300 jobs would be created, 2,495 new owners and 3,417 new horses would be attracted to the sport.

Betting turnover would increase by £500m because of increased field sizes, additional races and marketing to punters. Bookmakers profits would go up by £65m.

Government would benefit from £43m extra VAT and £25m extra betting duty from increased turnover. Other tax benefits and reduced unemployment would mean "it is likely that a duty cut of 1.75 per cent by Government would be at least revenue neutral".

So, if that anaylsis is correct, racing will be £80m better off and bookmakers' profits will jump by a total of £85m — without costing the Government a penny. What are the odds of sneaking that one past Gordon Brown?

PRINCIPAL FINDINGS

☐ British racing is severely underfunded, compared to other countries. Government takes too much from betting compared to racing's return, yet the sport is powerless to change the financial equation.

☐ Racing needs an extra £150 million a year. Government should cut betting duty by 1.75 per cent — worth £80 million — and transfer money to levy. Racing should generate £25 million extra through self help.

☐ Investment of £105 million would create more than 9,000 new jobs, attract 2,400 new owners and 3,400 new horses. Bookmaker profits would rise by £85 million and direct government taxes by £68 million.

☐ Review of betting legislation — and deregulation to allow betting in shops and pubs. Racecourses should be allowed daily simulcast betting and amusement machine gambling to maximise revenue.

☐ Other taxes and indirect benefits, such as reduced unemployment, would mean a 1.75 per cent duty cut would be "at least revenue-neutral for the Government".

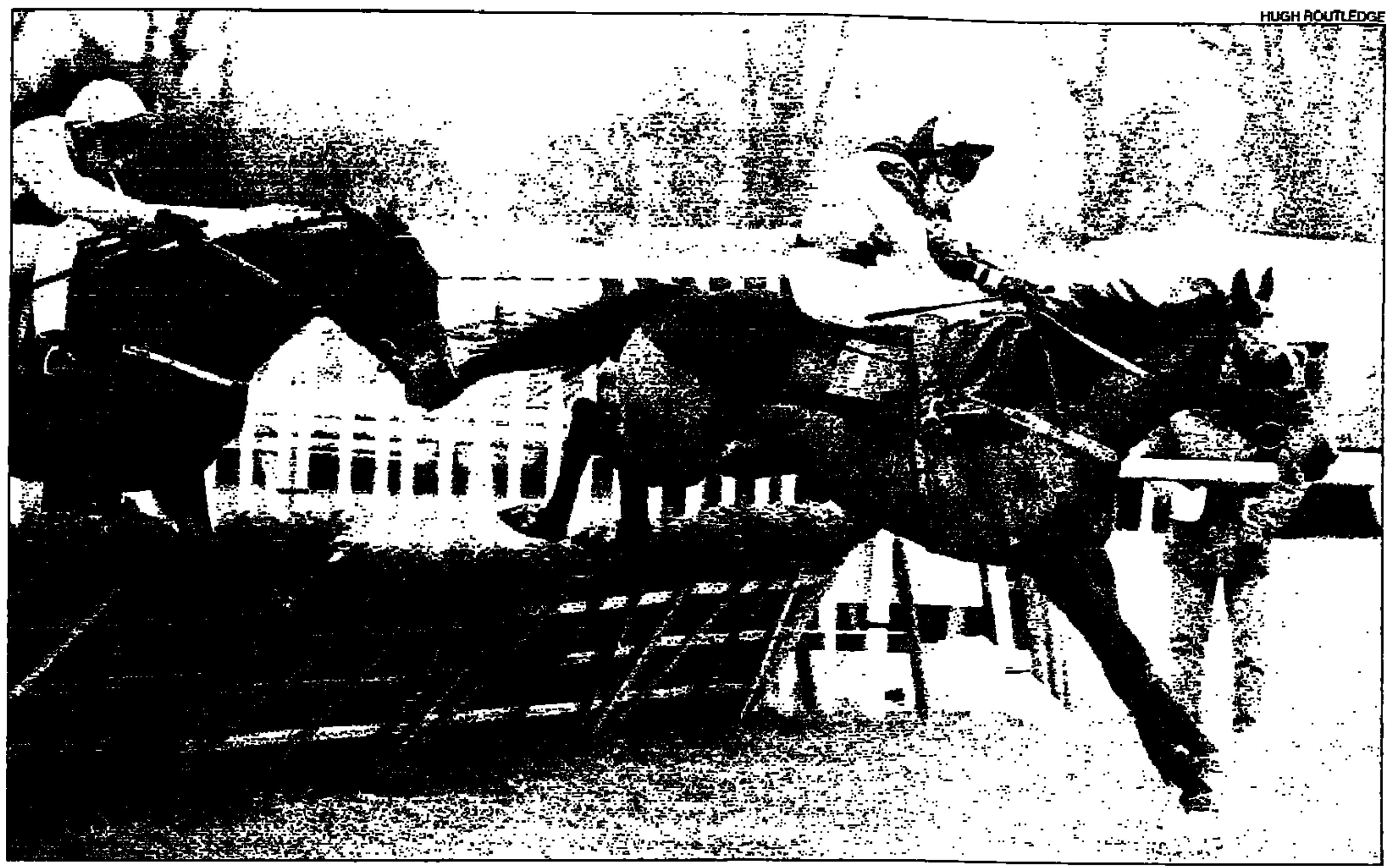
RICHARD EVANS

Nap: Mister Blake
(2.40 Bangor)

Stamina is Mister Blake's strong suit, so he should relish the extended four miles at Bangor today. He won at the Welsh course on his debut over fences and was not disgraced last time out.

NB: Boots Madden
(2.50 Exeter)

HUGH ROUTLEDGE



On the day the British Horseracing Board considered the sport's underfunding, Ainsi Soit II's winner's prize at Folkestone was just £2,301

WINNERS AND LOSERS IN THE BETTING STAKES

Breakdown of UK horserace betting turnover	
Return to punter	78.00%
General betting duty	6.75%
Levy	1.19%
Overheads	11.71%
Bookmaker profit (Horseracing only)	2.35%

Percentage of betting turnover returned to racing	
Germany	14.84%
USA	9.20%
Japan	8.48%
France	8.14%
South Africa	3.48%
Australia	3.00%
Britain	1.19%

% return to owners from prize money against training expenses	
Japan	90%
South Africa	61%
Italy	57%
France	49%
USA	47%
Germany	41%
Australia	38%
Britain	24%
Ireland	19%

Source: International Federation of Horseracing Authorities October 1997

BANGOR

THUNDERER

12.40 MILLING BROOK (nap)
1.10 Deano's Beeno
1.40 Wren Warbler
2.10 Pearl Anniversary
2.40 Mister Blake
3.10 Selatan
3.40 Bassey

GUIDE TO OUR IN-LINE RACECARD

101 113143 GOOD TIMES 13 (BF,F,G,S) (Mrs D Robinson) B Hall 12-0 .... B West (7) 88

Racecard number. Six-figure form (F — fell. P — pulled up. U — unseated rider. B — brought down. S — slipped up. R — refused. D — disqualified). Horse's name. Days since last outing. F if flat. (B — blinkers. V — visor. H — hood. E — Eyeshield. C — course winner. D — distance winner. CD — course and distance winner. BF — beaten favourite in latest race). Going on which horse has won (F — firm, good to firm, hard. G — good. S — soft, good to soft, heavy). Owner in brackets. Trainer. Age and weight. Rider plus any allowance. The Times Timekeeper's speed rating.

GOING: SOFT (CHASE COURSE); GOOD, GOOD TO SOFT IN PLACES (HURDLES) SIS
TOTE JACKPOT MEETING

12.40 RED COAT CONDITIONAL JOCKEYS HANDICAP HURDLE
(£2,654: 2m 1f) (8 runners)

101	106/	EBEN AL HABEEB 580 (CD,S) (Bankhouse Conl) D McCain 6-11-10	G Hogan	–
102	2045-03	DONTDRESSFORDINNER 9 (D,F,G) (DDFD Pnrs) R Hodges 7-11-9	T Dascombe	98
103	1420-03	BRUMON 19 (V,S) (P Holinej) M Mullineaux 6-11-8	P Henley	96
104	550-234	EVEZIO RUFO 13 (V,F) (T Clarke) N Littmoden 5-11-5	J Goldstein (3)	94
105	F0P-652	CARROLLS ROCK 14 (S) (C est La Vie Pnrs) C Mann 6-10-10	J Magee	102
106	PFP-655	MILLING BROOK 14 (C,G) (M James) J Bradley 5-10-9	D J Kavanagh	101
107	0360441	ERICOLIN 6 (V,D,F,G,S) (Mr C Stokell) Miss A Stokell 7-10-8 (7ex)	X Aizpuru	89
108	PPSPP-P	ALTHREY ARISTOCRAT 40 (F Lloyd) F Lloyd 7-10-0	C Rae (3)	–

Long handicap: Althrey Aristocrat 9-2

BETTING: 11-4 Dontdressfordinner, 7-2 Brumon, 4-1 Carrolls Rock, 5-1 Ericolin, 13-2 Evezio Rufo, 7-1 others.

1996: KINTAVI 6-10-13 G Hogan (2-1 fav) T Donnelly 10 ran

FORM FOCUS Dontdressfordinner 11l 3rd of 7 to Galloping Guns in handicap hurdle at Ludlow (2m, good). Brumon 12l 3rd of 8 to Riverbank Rose in handicap hurdle at Bangor (2m 1f, good to soft). Evezio Rufo 18l 4th of 16 to South West Express in selling handicap hurdle at Leicester (2m 4f 110yd, soft). Carrolls Rock 5l 2nd of 7 to Ranger Sloane in handicap hurdle at Southwell (2m, good). Milling Brook 33l 5th of 10 to Crown And Cushion in handicap hurdle at Southwell (2m 4f 110yd, good). Ericolin beat Albemine 6l in 13-runner selling handicap hurdle at Fakenham (2m, good).

EVEZIO RUFO failed to stay 2½ miles last time and will appreciate the drop in trip

1.10 ASTBURY WREN HANDICAP HURDLE (£4,783: 3m) (5 runners)

201	105-11	DEANO'S BEENO 18 (S) (Axon) M Pipe 5-11-10	A P McCoy	152
202	2PF0-PF	BUCKHOUSE BOY 11 (C,G,S) (Bawtry Boys) D Nicholson 7-11-4	R Johnson	–
203	10F-P2P	BELL STAFFBOY 18 (D,F,G,S) (R Bell) J O'Shea 8-10-13	Michael Brennan (3)	154
204	51F-535	BALANAK 18 (G,S) (N Dore) D Gandolfo 6-10-10	G Bradley	153
205	-4F6533	PRUSSIA 4 (F) (Prussia Partnership) W Clay 6-10-0	G Tormey	132

Long handicap: Prussia 8-5

BETTING: 2-5 Deano's Beeno, 7-1 Prussia, 9-1 Bell Staffboy, 10-1 Balanak, 12-1 Buckhouse Boy

1996: FREDDIE MUCK 6-11-0 C Llewellyn (3-1 fav) N Twiston-Davies 7 ran

FORM FOCUS Deano's Beeno beat Mentmore Towers 7l in 10-runner handicap hurdle at Haydock (2m 6f, soft) with Balanak (14lb better off) 46l 5th. Buckhouse Boy fell in chase at Sandown (3m 110yd, good). Bell Staffboy pulled up in handicap chase grade 3 at Newbury (3m 2f 110yd, good to soft), previously 7l 2nd of 6 to Tarrower in handicap hurdle at Haydock (2m 4f, good). Prussia 12l 3rd of 9 to Splendid Thyne in handicap hurdle at Haydock (2m 7f 110yd, good to soft).

DEANO'S BEANO is progressing well and hard to oppose

1.40 CLWYD NOVICES CHASE (£3,550: 2m 4f 110yd) (7 runners)

301	1205-31	BURNT IMP 18 (D,F,G,S) (N Mason (Farms) Ltd) G M Moore 7-11-8	J Callaghan	89
302	0P PP0-	CAPTAIN MY CAPTAIN 285 (G,S) (Accident Marmers) R Brotherton 9-11-2	L Harvey	–
303	0UPU6-	HIGH HANDED 295 (T Caldwell) T Caldwell 6-11-2	Michael Brennan (3)	–
304	50-	LISAHANE OATS 615 (J Whelan) A Barrow 7-11-2	Mr O McPhail (7)	–
305	3125-	MOUNTAIN PATH 219 (BF,S) (A Speelman) N Henderson 7-11-2	J R Kavanagh	80
306	255/F-5	WREN WARBLER 14 (S) (Mrs P Robeson) Mrs P Robeson 7-10-11	B Powell	–
307	0-42060	PRINCELY AFFAIR 40 (Mrs J Checkers) J Bradley 4-10-7	R Johnson	–

BETTING: 8-11 Burnt Imp, 7-4 Mountain Path, 14-1 Wren Warbler, 20-1 Captain My Captain, 25-1 others.

1996: AROUND THE GALE 5-11-6 R Dunwoody (4-7 fav) D Gandolfo 8 ran

FORM FOCUS Burnt Imp beat Phar Echo 6l in 6-runner novice chase at Newcastle (2m 4f, good). High Handed 47l 6th of 17 to Ionio in novice hurdle at Ludlow (2m 5f 110yd, good). Lisahane Oats 44l 10th of 14 to Mandys Mantino in novice hurdle at Ascot (2m 4f, good to soft). Mountain Path 36l last of 5 to Nordic Spree in handicap hurdle at Towcester (2m 5f, soft); previously 2½l 2nd of 11 to Supreme Flyer in novice hurdle at Stratford (2m 6f 110yd, good). Wren Warbler 34l 5th of 11 to Royal Event in novice chase at Southwell (2m, good).

BURNT IMP was the best of these over hurdles and should win with a clear round

COURSE SPECIALISTS

TRAINERS	Wins	Rns	%	JOCKEYS	Winners	Rides	%
P Webber	3	7	42.9	G Bradley	7	25	28.0
D Nicholson	[illegible]	52	32.7	T Dascombe	5	20	25.0
R Hodges	3	10	30.0	D J Burchell	4	18	22.2
M Pipe	26	89	29.2	A P McCoy	10	45	22.2
[illegible]	[illegible]	53	21.2	G Tormey	3	16	18.8
D [illegible]	4	21	19.0	W Marston	8	50	16.0

2.10 MAESFEN NOVICES SELLING HURDLE
(£2,306: 2m 1f) (14 runners)

401	00-4062	ADMIRAL'S GUEST 7 (J Jardine) W Clay 5-11-5	G Tormey	71
402	0/P-P04	ALBERT THE LION 9 (J Neville) J Neville 5-11-5	Mr S Durack (5)	50
403	F0-	GOLD OF ARABIA 236 (W Tyler) K Morgan 4-11-5	P Morris (5)	–
404	060400	LILILO 40 (R Lee) R Lee 5-11-5	I Pike (7)	50
405	0-0500	LYSANDER 34 (P Lamyman) Mrs S Lamyman 5-11-5	J Magee (3)	–
406		PEARL ANNIVERSARY 4F (J Pointon & Sons) Miss S Wilton 4-11-5	B Powell	–
407	0FP-60	SHAWKEY 23 (C Bigley Partnership Ltd) D McCain 4-11-5	T Jenks	–
408	36	ZAHAALIE 23 (C Wroe) J Pickering 5-11-5	W Marston	74
409	2453603	INDIAN NECTAR 12 (Mrs C Newman) R Brotherton 4-11-0	L Harvey	86
410	3855	AFICIONADO 20 (Mrs C Cole) R Hodges 3-10-5	T Dascombe	80
411	F	FLAHIVE'S FIRST 23 (Miss N Stowes) D Burchell 3-10-5	D J Burchell	–
412	50	IMPALA 20 (Mrs C Scott) W G M Turner 3-10-5	J Goldstein (7)	–
413	406	ALIMERJAM 20 (Mrs S Babbage) N Babbage 3-10-0	R Thornton	51
414	F0-	GABOVA 162F (M Pipe Racing Club) M Pipe 3-10-0	A P McCoy	–

BETTING: 7-2 Gabova, 9-2 Admiral's Guest, 6-1 Aficionado, 7-1 Indian Nectar, 10-1 Albert The Lion, Pearl Anniversary, Alimerjam, 12-1 others

1996: D'NAAN 3-10-6 A P McCoy (13-8 fav) M Pipe 14 ran

FORM FOCUS Admiral's Guest 7l 2nd of 7 to Once More For Luck in selling hurdle at Leicester (2m, soft). Albert The Lion 21l 4th of 12 to Meadow Dancer in novice claiming hurdle at Ludlow (2m, good). Gold Of Arabia beaten a distance last of 7 to Brecon in 4yo novice hurdle at Perth (2m 110yd, good). Lililo 57l 8th of 15 to Racing Hawk in novice selling hurdle at Uttoxeter (2m 4f 110yd, good). Lysander 64l 12th of 19 to Namoodaj in novice hurdle at Market Rasen (2m 1f 110yd, good) with Admiral's Guest (levels) 78l 14th. Zahaalie 18l 6th of 16 to Final Stab in selling hurdle at Ludlow (2m, good) with Flahive's First (2lb better off) fell. Indian Nectar 9¼l 3rd of 8 to Supermick in selling hurdle at Hereford (2m 1f, good). Aficionado 12l 5th of 12 to Circle Of Magic in 3yo novice selling hurdle at Taunton (2m 1f, good) with Alimerjam (levels) 13l 6th. Impala 46l 7th of 16 to Virtuoso in 3yo novice hurdle at Uttoxeter (2m, good). Gabova 17l 8th of 10 to Lawful Find in hurdle at Compiegne (2m 3f, good)

INDIAN NECTAR has the best form on offer in a poor race

2.40 HALEWOOD INTERNATIONAL LAMBRINI HANDICAP CHASE
(£4,104: 4m 1f) (9 runners)

501	1P0-411	SLIDEOFHILL 23 (G,S) (J McManus) J J O'Neill 8-11-13	A P McCoy	117
502	4412-11	TOP JAVALIN 39 (C,G,S) (Mrs V Thom) N Hawke 10-11-12	R Greene	121
503	1P-3P60	GLENFINN PRINCESS 58 (F,S) (P McGinty) P Bowen 9-11-6	W Marston	125
504	1/054-2	KEANO 31 (S) (Midavon Partnership) D Nicholson 8-11-5	R Johnson	122
505	3221-43	LAY IT OFF 16 (F,S) (J O'Neill) J O'Neill 8-10-11	S Curran	120
506	300P-15	MISTER BLAKE 22 (C,F,G) (W Edwards) R Lee 7-10-5	R Thornton	116
507	4042-40	SHAMARPHIL 16 (F,S) (Miss S Barraclough) R Alner 11-10-1	Miss S Barraclough	128
508	2380-33	DEISE MARSHALL 16 (J Wade) J Wade 9-10-0	Mr S Durack (5)	107
509	3PP-655	L'UOMO PIU 34 (F,G,S) (C Spencer) A Barrow 13-10-0	Mr O McPhail (7)	127

Long handicap: L'Uomo Piu 9-4

BETTING: 11-4 Slideofhill, 3-1 Top Javalin, 5-1 Lay It Off, 6-1 Keano, 7-1 Mister Blake, 10-1 Shamarphil, 12-1 Deise Marshall, 14-1 others

1996: PENNINE PRIDE 9-10-1 N Williamson (5-1) M Hammond 10 ran

FORM FOCUS Slideofhill beat Mutual Agreement 6l in 7-runner handicap chase at Ludlow (3m 3f 110yd, good). Top Javalin beat Ask Me Later 2½l in 6-runner handicap chase at Uttoxeter (3m 2f, soft). Glenfinn Princess 56l 7th of 11 to Black Church in handicap chase at Plumpton (2m 5f, good). Keano ½l 2nd of 5 to Coverdale Lane in handicap chase at Towcester (2m 6f, good). Lay It Off 9l 3rd of 9 to Dream Leader in handicap chase at Folkestone (3m 2f, good) with Shamarphil (4lb better off) 37l 7th. Mister Blake 11l 5th of 9 to High Learie in handicap chase at Huntingdon (3m, good). Deise Marshall beaten a distance 3rd of 8 to Young Kenny in novice chase at Kelso (3m 1f, good to soft). L'Uomo Piu 36l 5th of 10 to Dream Leader in handicap chase at Taunton (3m, good)

DEISE MARSHALL has been crying out for a real test of stamina and should go close

3.10 BODFARI STUD HANDICAP CHASE
(£4,104: 2m 4f 110yd) (6 runners)

601	1F44-51	SISTER ROSZA 19 (CD,S) (P Lamyman) Mrs S Lamyman 9-12-0	J Magee (3)	125
602	2121332	BRAMBLEBERRY 25 (CD,F,G,S) (Hampers Racing) Mrs S Smith 8-11-11	R Guest	126
603	5620-32	JYMJAM JOHNNY 20 (S) (Pallet Recycling Services) J J O'Neill 8-11-8	A P McCoy	125
604	50052-P	BOB DEVANI 22 (D,G,S) (T Clack) T George 11-11-6	R Johnson	–
605	/0331-3	SELATAN 19 (G,S) (Starlight Racing) D Gandolfo 5-10-12	G Bradley	124
606	6324P-2	DOLIKOS 8 (D,S) (T Caldwell) T Caldwell 10-10-8	Michael Brennan (3)	127

BETTING: 9-4 Jymjam Johnny, 5-2 Brambleberry, 11-4 Sister Rosza, 8-1 Dolikos, 10-1 Selatan, 12-1 Bob Devani.

1996: DISTINCTIVE 7-10-9 C Llewellyn (5-1) M Wilkinson 8 ran

FORM FOCUS Sister Rosza beat Teinein 15l in 4-runner handicap chase at Bangor (2m 4f 110yd, good to soft). Brambleberry 4l 2nd of 9 to Storm Run in novice handicap chase at Aintree (2m, good to soft). Jymjam Johnny neck 2nd of 6 to Spring Gale in handicap chase at Uttoxeter (2m 4f, good). Bob Devani pulled up in handicap chase at Worcester (2m 7f 110yd, soft); previously 1l 2nd of 12 to Trench Hill Lass in handicap chase at Down Royal (2m 4f, good to soft). Selatan beaten a distance 3rd of 5 to Forest Ivory in novice chase at Bangor (3m 110yd, good to soft), previously beat Prussia neck in 13-runner handicap hurdle at Bangor (3m, good). Dolikos 1¼l 2nd of 4 to The Toiseach in handicap chase at Huntingdon (2m 4f 110yd, good)

JYMJAM JOHNNY was just in need of the run at Uttoxeter and will take all the beating

3.40 GOLDFORD STUD INTERMEDIATE OPEN NATIONAL HUNT FLAT RACE (£1,319: 2m 1f) (15 runners)

1	4	BASSEY 23 (Barrow Boys) N Henderson 4-11-4	T C Murphy (7)	–
2	03	BUCKALOON 26 (A Brooke Rankin) W M Brisbourne 5-11-4	A P McCoy	–
3	6	HILLESDEN 42 (M Deeley) D Nicholson 4-11-4	R Massey (3)	–
4		IGLOO (M Mullineaux) M Mullineaux 5-11-4	S Wynne	–
5		JALON (F Sainsbury) P Bowen 5-11-4	R Johnson	–
6	0-	MO'S BOY 403 (C Potts Racing) Mrs S Smith 6-11-4	B Pouth (7)	–
7		MR LAMBRINI (Halewood International Ltd) Mrs L Williamson 5-11-4	W Marston	–
8	0	NUNS BEST FRIEND 12 (E Griffiths) J Bradley 4-11-4	B Powell	–
9		VERTICAL AIR (D McCain) D McCain 4-11-4	Mr G Lake (7)	–
10		BRYMAR LASS (R Hall) P R Webber 5-10-13	Mr P Scott	–
11	06	DUNRAVEN LADY 49 (D Brace) D Brace 5-10-13	Miss P Jones	–
12		MERRY CHRISTMAS (E H Owen) E Owen Jun 4-10-13	Mr S Durack (5)	–
13	0	SHARP PRACTICE 16 (J O'Neill) J O'Neill 5-10-13	S Curran	–
14		TAKE THE CATCH (D Stoddart) P R Webber 4-10-13	G Bradley	–
15	0	WOODY SCUD 18 (Mrs J Pickering) J Pickering 5-10-13	O Burrows (5)	–

BETTING: 6-4 Hillesden, 5-2 Bassey, 7-1 Buckaloon, 8-1 Jalon, 12-1 Dunraven Lady, 16-1 Brymar Lass, Take The Catch, 20-1 others.

1996: SCORING PEDIGREE 4-11-4 S Curran (5-4 fav) J Mullins 14 ran

FORM FOCUS Bassey 5l 4th of 15 to Sunday Venture in NH flat race at Ludlow (2m, good). Buckaloon 9l 3rd of 8 to Justin Mac in NH flat race at Aintree (2m 110yd, good). Hillesden 7¼l 6th of 18 to Brambleshill Duke in NH flat race at Haydock (2m, good) with Buckaloon (levels) 25l 11th. Jalon, Deals gelding, half-brother to Flat winner Ohsomellow. Mo's Boy 38l 12th of 17 to Lady Rebecca in NH flat race at Wincanton (2m, good). Nuns Best Friend beaten a distance 14th of 15 to Kadou Nonantais in national hunt flat race at Hereford (2m 1f, good). Brymar Lass, Homo Sapien mare, sister to a winning hurdler and half-sister to a winning chaser. Dunraven Lady 9½l 6th of 14 to Irish Banker in NH flat race at Cheltenham (2m 110yd, good to firm). Merry Christmas, Handsome Sailor filly, out of hurdles winner Merry Jane. Sharp Practice 27l 11th of 14 to Pennywise in mares NH flat at Folkestone (2m 1f 110yd, good). Take The Catch, Rebel Pitcher filly, out of the lightly-raced Take The Veil. Woody Scud 61l 12th of 18 to Eddy's Son in NH flat race at Warwick (2m, good to soft).

BASSEY contested a strong race last time and will find this easier

YESTERDAY'S RESULTS

Folkestone

Going: good (good to firm in places)

12.30 (2m 1f 110yd hdle) 1. Ainsi Soit II (D Bridgwater, 7-2); 2. Ferrers (15-2); 3. August Twelfth (4-1). Come On Penny (4th) 11-4 fav. 7 ran. 1l, 1¼l. G McCourt. Tote: £3.10; £1.90, £3.40. DF: £37.00. CSF: £25.82.

1.00 (3m 2f ch) 1. Big Ben Dun (J R Kavanagh, 8-1); 2. Secret Bid (13-8 fav); 3. Pavlova (10-1). 7 ran. 1¼l, 11l. E James. Tote: £9.70; £3.50, £2.20. DF: £13.80. CSF: £20.97.

1.30 (2m 6f 110yd hdle) 1. Millmount (R Thornton, 3-1 jt-fav); 2. Caracol (3-1 jt-fav); 3. Quistaquay (7-2). 8 ran. ½l, 13l. T McGovern. Tote: £5.40; £1.70, £1.10, £1.90. DF: £5.10. CSF: £11.47. Tricast: £29.09.

2.00 (2m 5f ch) 1. Sir Dante (D Bridgwater, 13-8 fav); 2. Who Am I (3-1); 3. Benji (33-1). 7 ran. NR: Angelo's Double. Dist, 15l. R Rowe. Tote: £2.10; £1.30, £1.90. DF: £3.50. CSF: £6.74.

2.30 (2m 6f 110yd hdle) 1. Be My Mot (B Fenton, 10-1); 2. Old Decency (9-4 fav); 3. Fin Boc (7-1). 11 ran. NR: Cheeky Charlie. 1¼l, 1¼l. D Grissell. Tote: £13.60; £2.40, £1.20, £1.70. DF: £29.50. Trio: £19.50. CSF: £34.24.

3.00 (2m ch) 1. Pegmarine (J A McCarthy, 5-1); 2. Court Master (11-4); 3. Friendly Knight (15-8 fav). 7 ran. 2l, 10l. Mrs A Woodrow. Tote: £5.40; £2.80, £2.40. DF: £9.20. CSF: £19.10.

3.30 (2m 1f 110yd flat) 1. Merry Shot (R Farrant, 9-2); 2. Billy Moonshine (14-1); 3. Pointed Remark (7-4 fav). 11 ran. NR: Cloudy Bill. 5l, 12l. Mrs J Pitman. Tote: £5.60; £2.10, £2.60, £1.70. DF: £25.20. Trio: £35.20. CSF: £67.36.

Jackpot: not won (pool of £8,002.89 carried forward to Bangor today).

Placepot: £34.40 Quadpot: £5.30

Hereford

Going: good

1.10 (2m 1f hdle) 1. Aal El Aal (G Tormey, 5-1); 2. Jaques Glen (11-4 fav); 3. Inchydoney Boy (12-1). 11 ran. 5l, 6l. P Hobbs. Tote: £5.30; £2.00, £1.60, £1.40. DF: £5.50. Trio: £55.10. CSF: £17.14.

1.40 (2m 3f ch) 1. Jason's Boy (R Johnson, 10-11 fav; Timekeeper's top rating); 2. Shimba Hills (11-2); 3. Koo's Promise (5-2). 5 ran. 2½l, 4l. J Bradley. Tote: £1.50; £1.10, £3.20. DF: £4.50. CSF: £5.90.

2.10 (2m hdle) 1. Astral Invasion (Gary Lyons, 4-1); 2. Prince De Berry (11-2); 3. Verde Luna (9-1). Play Games 9-4 fav. 8 ran. NR: The Secret Grey. 11l, sh hd. T Wall. Tote: £4.00; £2.80, £1.20, £2.10. DF: £10.20. Trio: £16.20. CSF: £23.34. Tricast: £186.75.

2.40 (2m 1f hdle) 1. Sibenan Mystic (C Maude, 11-4 jt-fav); 2. Nomar Lad (7-1); 3. Wadada (8-1). Pomme Secret 11-4 jt-fav. 8 ran. 6l, 1¼l. P Murphy. Tote: £4.40; £1.20, £2.10, £1.70. DF: £18.10. CSF: £19.83. Tricast: £122.65.

3.10 (3m 1f 110yd ch) 1. Torduff Express (C Maude, 100-30); 2. Lancastrian Jet (7-1); 3. Ah Shush (8-1). Riding Crop 11-4 fav. 12 ran. 9l, 1½l. P Nicholls. Tote: £3.50; £2.60, £4.10, £2.90. DF: £27.70. Trio: £44.20. CSF: £27.42.

3.40 (2m 3f 110yd hdle) 1. Studio Thirty (X Aizpuru, 7-1); 2. Lord Nitrogen (100-30 fav); 3. Castle Arrow (9-1). 10 ran. 1½l, 11l. R Dickin. Tote: £5.10; £1.60, £1.50, £3.70. DF: £13.80. Trio: £132.10. CSF: £30.74. Tricast: £203.34.

Placepot: £159.90
Quadpot: £21.30.

Musselburgh

Going: good

12.45 (2m hdle) 1. Baher (Miss R Clark, 8-1); 2. Tremmum (11-8 fav); 3. Fanadiyr (5-1). 7 ran. 7l, 3l. S Clark. Tote: £7.10; £1.50, £1.40. DF: £5.00. CSF: £17.76.

1.20 (3m ch) 1. Royal York (P Carberry, 2-1); 2. Coltstown Boy (20-1); 3. Forever Grey (66-1). Shanavogh (f) 4-6 fav. 9 ran. 25l, 24l. G Richards. Tote: £2.60; £1.50, £2.50, £2.60. DF: £21.30. Trio: £88.00. CSF: £24.63.

1.50 (2m 4f hdle) 1. Little Duke (Mr M Bradburne, 4-1); 2. Phantom Haze (10-1); 3. Victor Laszlo (10-1). Slasher Jack (4th) 5-4 fav. 14 ran. 15l, 3½l. Mrs S Bradburne. Tote: £9.50; £2.40, £3.40, £3.00. DF: £31.20. Trio: £144.00. CSF: £43.83.

2.20 (2m 4f ch) 1. Montrave (S Taylor, 5-1); 2. Puritan (8-1); 3. Ballyline (9-4 fav). 5 ran. Hd, ½l. J Goldie. Tote: £5.20; £1.60, £1.90. DF: £12.20. CSF: £29.69.

2.50 (2m ch) 1. Master Bavard (Mr M Bradburne, 7-4 fav); 2. Uk Hygiene (14-1); 3. Teejay'n'aitch (8-1). 8 ran. 20l, 1¼l. P Monteith. Tote: £3.10; £1.60, £3.10, £1.50. DF: £46.00. CSF: £24.13. Tricast: £150.48.

3.20 (3m hdle) 1. Nigel's Lad (M Foster, 10-11 fav); 2. Major Harris (7-2); 3. Lintathen (9-4). 4 ran. NR: Stan's Your Man. 8l, 30l. P Haslam. Tote: £1.80. DF: £2.40. CSF: £4.06.

Placepot: £376.90
Quadpot: £80.00

EXETER

THUNDERER

1.20 King Of The Blues. 1.50 Logical Step. 2.20 Indian Legend. 2.50 Full Of Oats. 3.20 Dtoto. 3.50 Rich Life.

GOING: GOOD TO SOFT (GOOD IN PLACES) SIS

1.20 OSPREY CLAIMING HURDLE
(£1,953: 2m 2f) (6 runners)

1	4131	TOTALLY YOURS 8 (V,F,G,S) M Pipe 4-11-7	C Maude
2	50-6	KING OF THE BLUES 34 J King 5-10-11	J Culloty
3	0446	SHAHRANI 8 (C,F) M Pipe 5-10-11	G Supple (5)
4	5062	TOP SKIPPER 22 (CD,G,S) V Greenway 5-10-11	Mr J Tizzard (5)
5	3612	WEATHER WISE 9 (BF,D,G) W G M Turner 5-10-11	R Dunwoody
6	6-05	MISS NIGHT OWL 34 R Frost 6-10-9	J Frost

4-5 Totally Yours, 9-2 King Of The Blues, 11-2 Weather Wise, 8-1 Shahrani, 10-1 Top Skipper, 25-1 Miss Night Owl

1.50 MERLIN NOVICES CHASE
(£4,078: 2m 2f) (12)

1	2-31	JEFFERIES 20 (G) J Old 8-11-8	C Llewellyn
2	-1U3	MILLCROFT RIVIERA 20 (C,F,G) R Alner 6-11-8	A Thornton
3	-2U4	AMBLESIDE 11 (BF,S) Mrs S Williams 6-11-2	S McNeill
4	/22-	CAPE HENRY 260P J Tuck 10-11-2	R Bellamy
5	0P-P	DANDE DOVE 48 K Bailey 6-11-2	N Williamson
6	410/	EBULLIENT EQUINAME 644 (G,S) N Henderson 6-11-2	M A Fitzgerald
7	0/P-	HAN LINE 285 M Coombe 9-11-2	Miss M Coombe
8	240/	HE FLIES BY NIGHT 1009 Miss H Knight 6-11-2	J F Titley
9	/222	IN THE BLOOD 11 (G,S) P Hobbs 6-11-2	R Dunwoody
10	34P-	LOGICAL STEP 285 D Gandolfo 7-11-2	D Leahy
11	66-2	PENNYMOOR PRINCE 12 (S) R Frost 8-11-2	J Frost
12	43-0	PROVE THE POINT 62 Mrs P Dutfield 4-10-0	P Holley

3-1 Jefferies, 7-2 Ebullient Equiname, 5-1 In The Blood, 11-2 Millcroft Riviera, 13-2 Ambleside, 12-1 He Flies By Night, Pennymoor Prince, 14-1 others

2.20 HOECHST ROUSSEL PANACUR E B F MARES ONLY NH NOVICES HURDLE
(£3,706: 2m 3f 110yd) (16)

1	633	BALLY LIRA 21 P Rodford 5-10-10	S Burrough
2		BUDS OF MAY H Hawke 7-10-10	J F Titley
3	20	DAISY 28 (BF) Mrs J Pitman 4-10-10	R Farrant
4	4054	FOLESCLAVE 23 J King 5-10-10	J Culloty
5	0	FRINGE BENEFIT 21 J Gifford 6-10-10	P Hide
6	433-	HOT 'N SAUCY 281 J Tuck 5-10-10	S McNeill
7	05	INDIAN LEGEND 34 Mrs S Williams 4-10-10	Sophie Mitchell (5)
8	100-	IT'SNOTSIMPLE 249 (G) R Frost 5-10-10	J Frost
9	/0-0	KENTFORD TINA 22 (G) J Mullins 6-10-10	A Thornton
10	3040	MAYBRIDGE LADY 21 P Hobbs 4-10-10	Mr R Widger (7)
11		MYSTERE K Bailey 4-10-10	N Williamson
12	FP1-	OH DONNA 255P (G) N Henderson 5-10-10	M A Fitzgerald
13	0	PINK SUGAR 21 N Hawke 6-10-10	J A McCarthy
14	3/0-	SUPER SAFFRON 341 B Smart 7-10-10	C Llewellyn
15	45-0	TARA GALE 16 (S) J Neville 5-10-10	R Dunwoody
16		VALLIS VALE J King 7-10-10	Mr E Byrne (7)

7-2 Oh Donna, 4-1 Daisy, 7-1 Kentford Tina, 8-1 Fringe Benefit, Mystere, 12-1 Tara Gale, 14-1 Bally Lira, Folesclave, Maybridge Lady, 16-1 others

2.50 EDIMBOURG HANDICAP CHASE
(£4,893: 2m 7f 110yd) (9)

1	3F-F	FULL OF OATS 18 (G,S) Miss H Knight 11-11-11	J Culloty
2	1-25	ORSWELL LAD 11 (S) P Hobbs 8-11-8	R Dunwoody
3	UP/P	FALMOUTH BAY 27 (G,S) O Sherwood 8-11-4	J A McCarthy
4	-534	FOOLS ERRAND 30 (C,F,G,S) G Balding 7-11-4	B Clifford
5	1/40	BRAVE HIGHLANDER 12 (G,S) J Gifford 9-11-1	P Hide
6	16-1	MALWOOD CASTLE 12 (CD,F,G,S) R Alner 7-10-12	A Thornton
7	23-1	THERMAL WARRIOR 11 (G,S) J Old 9-10-5	C Llewellyn
8	14-1	BOOTS MADDEN 81 (D,G,S) Miss V Williams 7-10-0	N Williamson
9	243-	MOZE TIDY 276P (G,S) R Frost 12-10-0	J Frost

9-4 Boots Madden, 7-2 Thermal Warrior, 4-1 Malwood Castle, 11-2 Orswell Lad, 13-2 Full Of Oats, 7-1 Fools Errand, 12-1 Brave Highlander, 16-1 others

3.20 HENRIETTA KNIGHT BIRTHDAY NOVICES HANDICAP HURDLE (£2,839: 2m 2f) (6)

1	3111	THE BREWER 43 (C,F,G,S) J Tuck 5-12-0	R Bellamy
2	-453	BLAZE OF SONG 11 D Wintle 5-10-13	C Llewellyn
3	-643	HEART 23 Miss H Knight 4-10-13	M A Fitzgerald
4	5-22	WALTER'S DESTINY 12 C Mitchell 5-10-6	S McNeill
5	-354	QUEEN OF THE SUIR 12 N Mitchell 8-10-0	Sophie Mitchell (5)
6	-540	DTOTO 12 R Baker 5-10-0	V Slattery

11-6 The Brewer, 3-1 Walter's Destiny, 7-2 Heart, 4-1 Blaze Of Song, 10-1 Queen Of The Suir, 16-1 Dtoto

3.50 HARRIER HANDICAP HURDLE
(£2,982: 2m 2f) (5)

1	0400	GREENBACK 11 (C,F,G,S) P Hobbs 6-12-0	C Llewellyn
2	3/3-	AMTRAK EXPRESS 249 (F,G,S) Mrs J Pitman 10-11-9	R Farrant
3	2-3P	LETS BE FRANK 22 (F,G,S) N Chance 6-11-4	M A Fitzgerald
4	1-25	BOLD STATEMENT 22 (BF,F,G,S) T Forster 5-11-4	N Williamson
5	1/P-	RICH LIFE 221 (D,F,G,S) R Baker 7-10-6	V Slattery

7-4 Bold Statement, 11-4 Greenback, 3-1 Lets Be Frank, 4-1 Amtrak Express, 25-1 Rich Life

COURSE SPECIALISTS

TRAINERS: Miss H Knight, 34 winners from 114 runners, 29.8%. O Sherwood, 5 from 19, 26.3%. M Pipe, 76 from 294, 25.9%. J Gifford, 6 from 31, 19.4%. N Henderson, 5 from 26, 19.2%. P Hobbs, 26 from 137, 19.0%.

JOCKEYS: R Dunwoody, 35 winners from 140 rides, 25.0%. J Titley, 9 from 40, 22.5%. P Holley, 12 from 67, 17.9%. C Maude, 14 from 83, 16.9%. J Frost, 20 from 145, 13.8%. M Fitzgerald, 15 from 111, 13.5%.

BLINKERED FIRST TIME: There are no horses blinkered for the first time today.

CATTERICK

THUNDERER

1.00 Prime Example. 1.30 Once More For Luck. 2.00 Karenastino. 2.30 Toby. 3.00 Shining Edge. 3.30 Lord Of The Rings.

Timekeeper's top rating:
2.30 DISTANT STORM.

GOING: GOOD (GOOD TO SOFT IN PLACES) SIS

1.00 HELISTER NOVICES CHASE
(£3,084: 3m 1f 110yd) (8 runners)

1	4-UF	DESPERATE DAYS 8 (S) F Kirby 8-10-12	T Reed	97
2	22/3	FEELS LIKE GOLD 11 (S) G Richards 9-10-12	B Harding (3)	124
3	-60U	GALE FORCE 16 P Beaumont 6-10-12	R Supple	–
4	364F	MENALDI 2 P Cheesbrough 7-10-12	A S Smith	–
5	64-2	PRIME EXAMPLE 31 M Todhunter 6-10-12	P Carberry	105
6	-656	FRUMERTY 36 J Curtis 5-10-11	G Lee	–
7	3650	SUL FOSSO 14 Mrs S Smith 5-10-11	R Wilkinson (5)	80
8	51-3	CLAIRABELL 23 (G) J Charlton 6-10-7	B Storey	120

6-4 Prime Example, 5-2 Feels Like Gold, Clairabell, 12-1 Menaldi, 20-1 others.

1.30 RAFFYARD HOUSE SELLING HURDLE
(£1,954: 2m 3f) (10)

1		ARCHIE-T P Beaumont 4-10-12	B Grattan (5)	–
2	06-	BLUE LUGANA 235F N Bycroft 5-10-12	R Supple	87
3	350	HIGHFIELD PET 7 C Grant 4-10-12	C McCormack (5)	80
4	0	KAKASHDA 93 J Howard Johnson 6-10-12	A S Smith	90
5	0	LAW DESIGNER 14 S Bell 5-10-12	K Johnson	–
6	0/P0	MENOO WHO 14 F Kirby 5-10-12	J Supple	65
7	2-21	ONCE MORE FOR LUCK 7 (S) M Reveley 6-10-12	P Niven	116
8	0-P0	THE OPERATOR 7 G Richards 6-10-12	B Harding (3)	56
9	PU	DARIO'S GIRL 9 J Haynes 4-10-7	D Parker	–
10	F0	NATIVE SONG 7 W Storey 4-10-7	M Moloney	–

2-5 Once More For Luck, 8-1 Highfield Pet, Kakashda, The Operator, 9-1 others.

2.00 RACING CHANNEL HANDICAP CHASE
(£2,570: 2m 3f) (5)

1	21-4	JUDICIAL FIELD 8 (B,CD,F,G,S) N Tinkler 8-12-0	R Garritty	121
2	0F1U	MR FUDGE 18 (CD,F,G,S) M Sowersby 10-11-1	M H Naughton (5)	119
3	3631	CUMBERLAND BLUES 8 (F,G) A J Lockwood 8-11-1 (7ex)	Miss A Deniel	89
4	4460	REVE DE VALSE 9 (C,F,G,S) R Johnson 10-10-5	K Johnson	117
5	24-3	KARENASTINO 23 (C,S) Mrs S Smith 6-10-3	R Wilkinson (5)	100

2-1 Cumberland Blues, 11-4 Karenastino, Judicial Field, Mr Fudge, 8-1 others.

2.30 CATTERICK RACE CLUB 1998 AMATEUR RIDERS HANDICAP HURDLE
(£2,066: 2m 3f) (6)

1	11P3	TOBY 7 (F,G) G Richards 4-11-10	M Bradburne (7)	98
2	-211	CRAIGARY 14 (CD,G) Mrs A Swinbank 6-11-9	C Wilson (7)	99
3	1112	DISTANT STORM 12 (B,S) B Llewellyn 4-11-6	J Llewellyn (5)	101
4	623-	BITRAN 510 (G,S) B Rothwell 7-11-3	R Hale (5)	–
5	03-P	EMERALD VENTURE 18 (F) F Coton 10-10-0	M Kent (7)	91
6	1140	LADY CLARINA 12 (G) S Brookshaw 7-10-0	P Costello (7)	65

13-8 Craigary, 9-4 Toby, 100-30 Distant Storm, 16-1 Bitran, 14-1 others.

3.00 GARTH NOVICES CHASE (£2,889: 2m) (4)

1	-421	SHINING EDGE 25 (CD,F,G) T Easterby 5-11-5	L Wyer	137
2	1/50	CADEAUX PREMIERE 20 (D,F) D Smith 6-10-12	P Niven	90
3	/0-P	FORBES 34 J Howard Johnson 6-10-12	K Johnson	–
4	1/33	MINSTER GLORY 18 (D,F) M W Easterby 6-10-12	P Carberry	119

4-7 Shining Edge, 15-8 Minster Glory, 12-1 Cadeaux Premiere, 33-1 Forbes

3.30 HUTTON WANDESLEY NOVICES HANDICAP HURDLE (£2,066: 2m) (10)

1	-624	LUMBACK LADY 16 B Mactaggart 7-11-10	G Lee	96
2	260	SANDABAR 16 J Howard Johnson 4-11-5	A S Smith	80
3	03-2	PERPETUAL LIGHT 11F J J Quinn 4-11-5	L Wyer	95
4	4-10	MOST WANTED 5 (D,G) W McKeown 4-11-3	C McCormack (5)	85
5	060-	LIME STREET BLUES 74F T Keddy 6-11-5	S Ryan (5)	85
6	3F21	GALLOPING GUNS 9 (D,F,G) B Llewellyn 5-11-0	Guy Lewis (3)	89
7	/5-0	PUBLIC WAY 25 N Chamberlain 7-10-6	L O'Hara	57
8	000	LAY THE BLAME 23 M Hammond 4-10-5	R Garritty	77
9	2245	LORD OF THE RINGS 9 F Murphy 5-10-5	P Carberry	88
10	P-43	POINT DUTY 9 F Murtagh 7-10-0	R Supple	92

5-2 Galloping Guns, 7-2 Perpetual Light, 11-2 Lumback Lady, 13-2 Point Duty, 7-1 Lord Of The Rings, 8-1 Most Wanted, Lay The Blame, 10-1 others.

COURSE SPECIALISTS

TRAINERS: T Easterby, 8 winners from 20 runners, 40.0%. Mrs M Reveley, 22 from 98, 22.4%. N Tinkler, 5 from 24, 20.8%. W McKeown, 3 from 15, 20.0%. J J Quinn, 6 from 34, 17.6%.

JOCKEYS: P Niven, 26 winners from 90 rides, 28.9%. A S Smith, 17 from 67, 25.4%. M Moloney, 5 from 30, 16.7%. R Garritty, 14 from 88, 15.9%. P Carberry, 5 from 34, 14.7%. T Reed, 11 from 84, 13.1%.

RACELINE
0930 168+ COMMENTARY RESULTS
EXETER 101 201
BANGOR 102 202
CATTERICK 103 203
FULL RESULTS SERVICE 168

Ascot crowds

FEWER racegoers will be able to attend Royal Ascot next year. Crowd capacity in the Grandstand and Silver Ring will be reduced by 20 per cent. The Royal Enclosure will be unaffected.

Ladbroke weights

SHADOW LEADER, the Champion Hurdle second favourite, and Aidan O'Brien's Theatreworld head the weights announced yesterday for next month's Ladbroke Hurdle at Leopardstown. Commanche Court, the latest Triumph Hurdle winner, heads the sponsor's market at 10-1, while Alabang, the Maurice Camacho-trained gelding, is 12-1.

FOOTBALL: DERBY FORCED INTO WHOLESALE CHANGES

Smith summons Elliott as injuries take toll

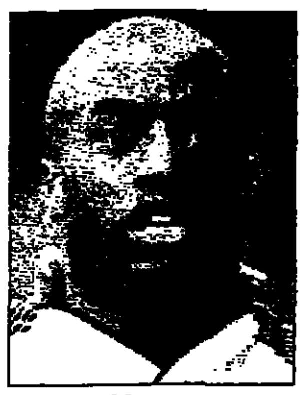
By Richard Hobson

HAVING conceded 15 goals in their previous four away games, it is evident where Derby County are going wrong, and the difficulties facing Jim Smith, the manager, in rectifying the problem were compounded when Igor Stimac, the talismanic captain, declared himself unfit for the FA Carling Premiership game against Newcastle United tonight. Smith, consequently, is without his entire first-choice back three.

Christian Dailly and Jacob Laursen are also injured and Smith has halted the loan transfer of Steve Elliott to Carlisle United. Elliott, 19, with two Coca-Cola Cup games to his name, was expecting to make his debut for Grimsby Town in the Nationwide League second division on Saturday. He may find St James' Park this evening a little livelier.

The alternative for Smith is to switch to a flat back four and reinforce his midfield. Derby lost out significantly in this area in a Coca-Cola Cup tie against Newcastle last month, United winning 1-0 through a goal by Tomasson, and the absence of Stimac allows Mauricio Solis, the Costa Rican, to feature as a third player from outside the European Community.

Attention at the training ground yesterday centred on Dean Sturridge, who is considering an invitation to play for Jamaica early next year and make himself available for the World Cup. "It is a very difficult decision. My mum and dad were both born in Jamaica and I am very proud of that," Sturridge said in his thick Birmingham accent. He admitted, rather sheepishly, that he has never actually been to Jamaica.


Sturridge: content

Sturridge was less cagey when asked about his commitment to Derby after speculation about a move to Everton. He asked for a transfer last summer, but no club met Derby's valuation of £7 million and he eventually signed a new contract.

"There were some things I was not sure about towards the end of last season but they have been sorted out," Sturridge, who had questioned the club's ambition, said. "I think we are close to being a very, very good team and I want to be part of it. I am not interested in Everton or anybody else because I am happy at Derby."

The pace of Sturridge and Paulo Wanchope through what used to be described as the inside-forward channels will pose the biggest threat to Newcastle this evening. Although Smith wants to rest Wanchope in the near future, the prospect of releasing him against Darren Peacock, Philippe Albert and Stuart Pearce is likely to prove irresistible.

Newcastle have taken just a single point from the past three matches and that against Barnsley, the bottom club. Although Ian Rush confirmed his return to fitness with a goal for the reserves on Monday, Kenny Dalglish, the manager, is expected to name an unchanged side for the third successive game. Newcastle lie in ninth place, 15 points behind Manchester United, but will climb above Derby into seventh spot with victory tonight. They can afford nothing less.

Two non-league sides will be attempting to follow Stevenage Borough's example against Cambridge United on Tuesday and win FA Cup second-round replays, knowing that victory will guarantee them huge pay-days against FA Carling Premiership opposition in the third round in January.

Ilkeston Town, of the Dr Martens League Southern division, are at home to Scunthorpe United, with the prize of a tie against Crystal Palace at Selhurst Park in prospect, while Emley take on Lincoln City at Huddersfield Town's McAlpine Stadium with West Ham United awaiting the winners.

Ilkeston will have more than 2,000 supporters packed into their tiny New Manor ground. The capacity has been reduced on police advice after crowd trouble during the first game, but Ilkeston insisted on retaining home advantage rather than switch the game to either Pride Park or Meadow Lane.

Hudson critical after accident

By Rob Hughes

ALAN HUDSON, one of the finest if ultimately unfulfilled talents of English football in the past 25 years, was fighting for his life last night. He was in a stable but critical condition in a London hospital after having a blood clot removed from his brain, and with a shattered pelvis, after he had been knocked down by a car in east London.

Hudson, 46, had apparently stepped off the pavement at 10.30pm on Monday after leaving the Sports Writers' Association awards, and the former Chelsea, Stoke City and Arsenal player then underwent 14 hours of brain surgery.

"At one point it didn't look like he was going to pull through," Alan Jr, his son, said on BBC Radio 5 Live. "I had a phone-call at 1am and have been at the hospital since. Me and the family sat in the chapel praying to God for the first time in my life. He's not fully recovered, but they have stabilised the bleeding, so it looks as if He has pulled something out."

Glenn Hoddle, the England coach, paid tribute to Hudson last night, and added: "The thoughts and prayers of everyone in football are with Alan Hudson and his family." Hoddle also described Hudson as one of the outstanding players of his era, a thought that had previously been suggested by Sir Alf Ramsey, the former England manager, who, when Hudson was an apprentice footballer, said: "There is no limit to what this boy can achieve."

He had, by then, defied medical fears that, because of painful shins, he would never play the professional game. He did, for Chelsea, then for Stoke where, under the management of Tony Waddington, Hudson progressed to make one of the finest England debuts, against West Germany in 1975.

He made a contribution to 73 moves, he touched the ball 91 times, he succeeded in 73.3 per cent of what he attempted — and he did that by playing a more inventive game than most Englishmen had the imagination or the sense of freedom to exploit. Hudson, however, was given only one more cap by Don Revie, who mistrusted his indisciplined lifestyle, and possibly mistrusted his flair.

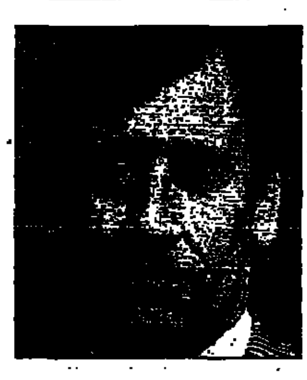
Hudson, whose sweet touch on the ball nevertheless won him armies of admirers, is now in the fight of his life. There are many hoping that he will defy the fears of doctors in a second, much greater fight, and return to his more recent job as an analyst of the game.

Mickelson lacks drive to win

GARY HARWOOD

Mickelson appears to suffer lapses in concentration that have cost him victory

JOHN HOPKINS



on a young American with major problems

Few golfers have been blessed with so many attributes as Phil Mickelson, who appears to have it all. He has a toothy smile as wide as the Rio Grande, a film star's looks and the game to establish himself as a regular winner of a major championship. No one since Severiano Ballesteros at his peak has played so many outrageously imaginative strokes from around the green.

Mickelson has won 11 tournaments and played twice in the Presidents Cup and the Ryder Cup. It may be harsh to say it, then, of a player who only turned professional in 1992, but suddenly he has the look of a man who has underachieved. Mickelson has not moved on as he should have done.

The rise of a new generation of champions in 1997 has brought this home. There is Tiger Woods, who is not yet 22, Justin Leonard, 25, David Duval, 26, and from Europe, one of the fastest-rising of all, Lee Westwood, 24. At 27, Mickelson is in this age group, but as another year draws to a close he is not one of its leaders.

Mickelson first came to prominence on this side of the Atlantic at the 1991 Walker Cup, when he played a memorable stroke at Port Marnock's short 15th. This difficult but beautiful hole by the sea has an elevated green and, for his second shot, Mickelson needed to loft the ball 15 feet into the air from a bare lie to get it on to the green and stop it near the hole. For a degree of difficulty, it was a 9.9 shot.

When Peter Alliss, who was commentating on television, realised what Mickelson was planning, he said that he could not believe his eyes. "He's an idiot to try it," Alliss said. Mickelson, however, full of the bravado of youth, played it perfectly, nipping the ball from the thin turf and stopping it two feet from the hole.

After demonstrating strokes such as this and winning a professional tournament while still an amateur, Mickelson turned professional and signed contracts worth £1 million, including one for £350,000 annually from a club manufacturer.

What has become evident, however, is that while Mickelson can win at will on the West Coast of the United States, he can do no such thing anywhere else. Only one of his 11 tour victories have come on a course east of the Mississippi.

> 'Suddenly, he has acquired the look of a man who has underachieved'

The lanky left-hander seems particularly vulnerable to lapses in concentration. He is not in contention for major championships often enough and, when he is, he often makes a mess of it. The best examples of this failing came in the past two US PGA Championships. Last year he led by four strokes after 36 holes and finished eighth; this year he was only one stroke off the lead at halfway and finished 29th.

Another limp finish came in the Million Dollar Challenge in South Africa earlier this month. Mickelson led by two strokes after 54 holes, but finished two strokes behind the winner.

Professional golfers are the models on which amateurs and club players base their game. The top players are not supposed to err in areas of the game on which their reputations are built. This past year, for example, Colin Montgomerie, who is renowned for being one of the straightest drivers in the world, has been anything but. By the same token, it is said that Mickelson is a deadly putter. But he missed a couple during the Ryder Cup at Valderrama that he should have made, and took three putts on the 72nd hole in South Africa, thereby reducing his winnings by £500,000.

His rounds also have a disturbing tendency to get worse during tournaments. His average position after 18 holes in events in the US this year was thirteenth; after 72 holes it was sixtieth. Does he give up?

One school of thought suggests that Mickelson shares characteristics with Greg Norman, one being that both have, or have had, loose swings. Norman has addressed this and, at 42, is swinging better than ever. Mickelson has yet to make any such change.

An imp of mischief wonders whether they believe in themselves in the way that Ben Hogan, Gary Player and Jack Nicklaus did? There is a degree of "they only love me for my looks", about the pair of them.

Mickelson walks along a fairway with his head up, a smile on his face, aware of the crowd. Contrast this with Justin Leonard, for instance, whose eyes are focused sharply on the ball and the fairway or green ahead of him. One cannot resist concluding that while Mickelson *may* be all business, Leonard, the Open champion, *is* all business.

Nomadic Brighton yearning for home

By Nick Szczepanik

WIMBLEDON might find playing home matches eight or so miles from Plough Lane inconvenient, but one club would love to be in their shoes. Supporters of Brighton and Hove Albion packed a public meeting on Monday, hoping for news of an end to their club's exile at Gillingham, 75 miles from home.

Groundsharing at the Priestfield Stadium, after the demise of the Goldstone Ground, sold by a previous board of directors to pay off debts, has been disastrous. Sales of a Goldstone Ground memorial video are outstripping those of the Spice Girls in Sussex, but supporters are reluctant to travel to the Medway for "home" matches.

The team that avoided demotion from the Nationwide League third division last season on the strength of a run of home victories, roared on by five-figure crowds, has won only once in front of average gates of 1,600 in Kent, and finds itself next-to-bottom of the league.

"The support at the Goldstone was a major factor in our getting out of trouble last year," Steve Gritt, the manager, said. "We need that again. Getting back to Brighton is a priority."

As well as the rent payable to Gillingham, the fall in gate revenue to a club that lost £900,000 last season has forced the release of the five highest-paid players, including Mark Morris, the influential defender. "It's not an exaggeration to say that the livelihood of this club depends on getting back [home]," Bob Pinnock, the club's financial director, said.

Plans for a multi-use community stadium are under discussion, but a more urgent requirement is a temporary home in the Brighton area. The club has targeted Withdean Stadium, but new floodlighting and seating will be required, and residents of the quiet, leafy neighbourhood already are concerned.

The club has proposed park-and-ride schemes and litter patrols to forestall objections, and has received support from the local press and, more importantly, the council, something denied the club's previous regime.

Ivor Caplin, the MP for Hove, said: "I've been encouraged by comments from both political parties that they believe it is important to bring the Albion back to the site that is best, and the only one that works is Withdean." Even so, planning processes being what they are, Brighton are unlikely to be rehoused before the beginning of next season.

Sedloski to cost Atkinson £1.75m

By Our Sports Staff

RON ATKINSON has made his second signing since taking over as the manager of Sheffield Wednesday last month — and once again he has looked abroad to strengthen his squad.

Having already paid IFK Gothenburg £750,000 for their Sweden international, Niclas Alexandersson, Atkinson has agreed a fee of £1.75 million with Hajduk Split for Goce Sedloski. Wednesday have agreed terms with the player and his club after he passed a medical, but could have to wait up to a month for the centre half to make his debut while a work permit is obtained.

Sedloski, 23, returned to Macedonia yesterday for his wedding on Saturday and will miss Chelsea's FA Carling Premiership visit to Hillsborough. Graham Mackrell, the Wednesday secretary, said: "Our game against Newcastle United [on January 10] may be the first one when he is eligible to play for us."

Sedloski has played regularly for Macedonia and Wednesday are confident that there will be no problem in obtaining the permit.

Bolton Wanderers may be punished by the Premier League for replaying controversial incidents during matches on their giant video screens at the Reebok Stadium.

Clubs are not allowed to show contentious action nor anything that may undermine the authority of the referee, but during Bolton's 3-3 draw against Derby County on Sunday, one player urged Uriah Rennie, the referee, to change his mind after seeing a replay on the screen.

The League can only act if Rennie or the match observer includes the incident in their report. "It has to be brought to our attention officially and if it is mentioned then we are duty-bound to take it further," a league spokesman said. "That may well result in some form of disciplinary action."

Ray Harford has made his first signing as Queens Park Rangers manager by agreeing to pay £250,000 for George Kulscar, the Bradford City midfield player. The Australia international has signed a three-year contract at Loftus Road.

☐ Manchester United learnt yesterday that the Amsterdam Arena has been provisionally selected as the venue for the European Cup final on May 20. The Cup Winners' Cup final will be held at the Rasunda Stadium in Stockholm on May 13, while Parc des Princes in Paris will host the Uefa Cup final on May 6.

SCHOOLS SPORT

Parents cry foul over cancelled tour

By John Goodbody

CRANLEIGH SCHOOL have cancelled their rugby tour of South Africa this summer because of the publicity surrounding the violence in the game against Eastbourne College on December 6.

Parents, who had already raised more than £2,500 for the three-week tour, the climax of the boys' sports career at Cranleigh, are "very upset" by the action taken by Neil Bennett, the first-team coach, and supported in a letter sent by Guy Waller, the headmaster.

The decision follows widespread concern at the increase of foul play and bad language in sports events at independent schools. Last week, the sports subcommittee of the Headmasters' and Headmistresses' Conference (HMC) circulated guidelines to schools urging them to act against bad behaviour.

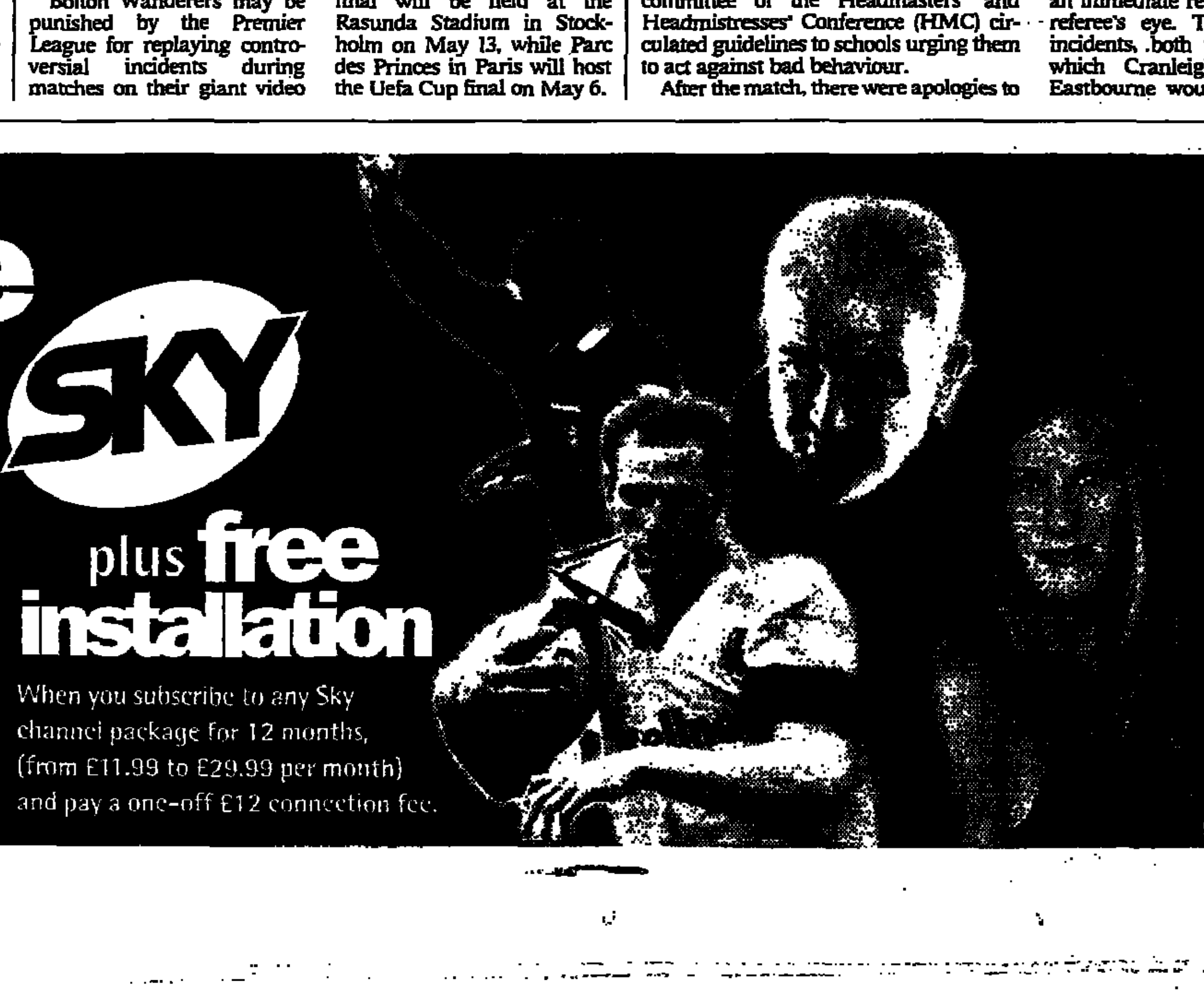
After the match, there were apologies to the Eastbourne coaching staff from Cranleigh parents, the headmaster and also Bennett, who at one point went on to the pitch to calm down one of his players. Eastbourne won 18-12 and are unbeaten in 24 consecutive matches since losing to Cranleigh in December 1995.

However, John Hume, an Old Cranleighan and father of one of the flankers on December 6, has written to *The Times* saying: "The first incident was an Eastbourne player's offensive racist remarks to the Nigerian-born Cranleigh winger. Unfortunately that brought about an immediate reaction which caught the referee's eye. There were other such incidents, both verbal and physical to which Cranleigh regrettably reacted. Eastbourne would have done better to direct their energies to crossing the line rather than abusing their opponents as no game is truly won on penalties."

Hume, who emphasised that he did not condone the violence, added yesterday: "I agree that if you are abused you should turn the other cheek, but regrettably life is not like that. My son told me that he was punched in the face during the game.

"I feel the tour should be allowed to go ahead. The punishment does not fit the crime. That match has been *blown out of* all proportion. Many boys have played together for five years at Cranleigh and there have been no other complaints."

He pointed out that the previous Tuesday there had been a "very hard game" against Maritzburg College of Natal and there were no complaints. No one was available from Cranleigh yesterday to comment.



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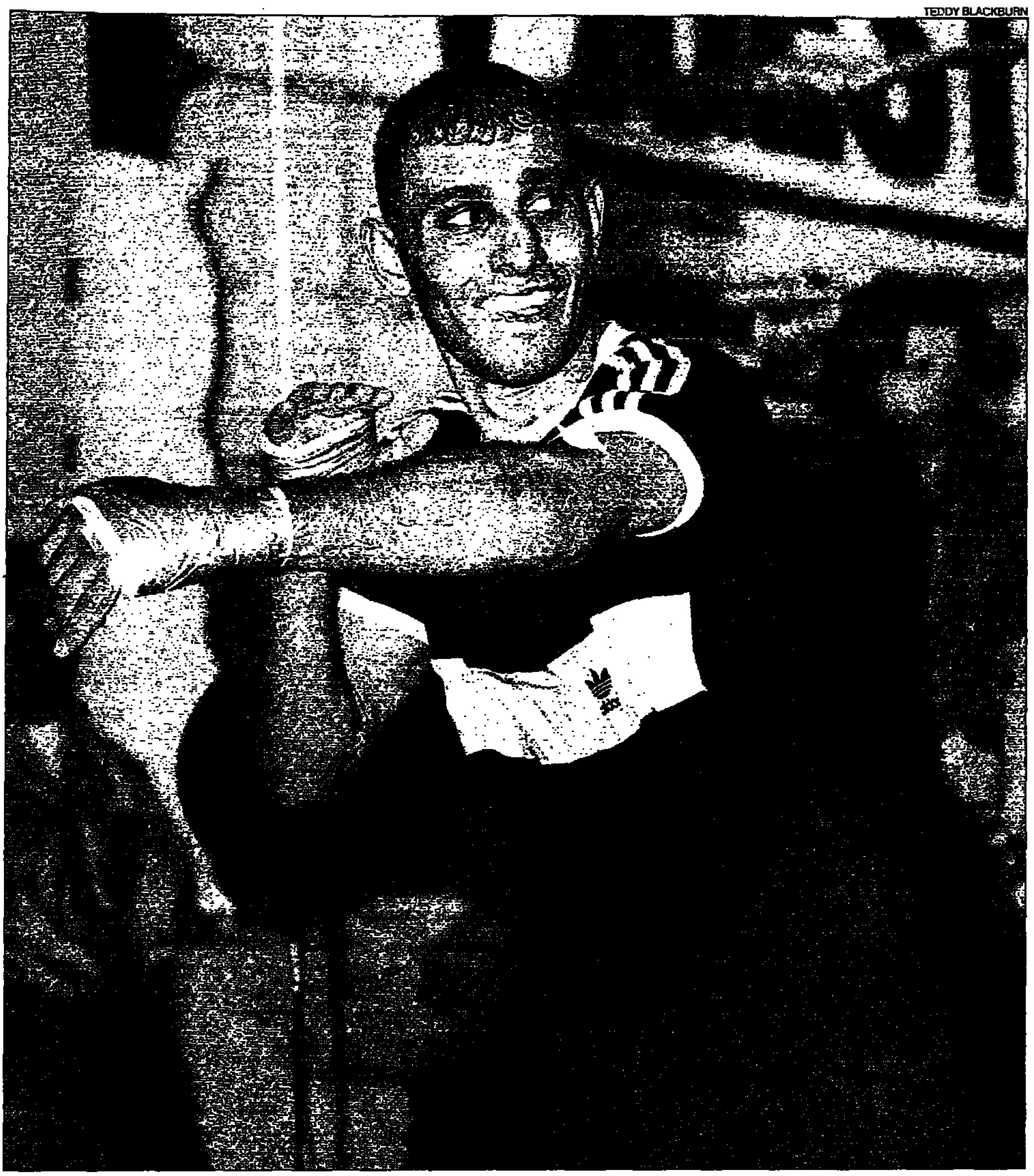
BOXING: NO EXPENSE SPARED IN BID TO PROMOTE BRITISH WORLD CHAMPION ON US DEBUT

Hamed receives star treatment

From Srikumar Sen
Boxing Correspondent
in New York


TEDDY BLACKBURN

Hamed shows the style during training that he hopes will win over the American public when he defends his title on Friday

NASEEM HAMED'S campaign to build a reputation in the United States is rolling along nicely. Two of the biggest names in boxing and entertainment, Muhammad Ali and Michael Jackson, will be at ringside here on Friday to see the man from Sheffield defend his World Boxing Organisation featherweight title against Kevin Kelley.

Ali is Hamed's idol and Jackson a personal friend. The two celebrities should provide the imprimatur that Hamed needs to convince New Yorkers that he is one of the world's leading boxers. Hamed said yesterday: "I'd be so pleased if Ali comes. If there's anybody I'd love to be there, it would be him. I just can't believe what the press are saying about Ali, saying that Naz says he's better than Ali.

"The guy's my idol. I look up to him as an inspiration. If they ask me who is the best of both of us, I've got to say my opinion. I've got to say I can box five different ways. I'm not saying blatantly I'm better than him. He's my idol. He's what I look up at and see and learn off. The guy's a living legend."

This week, HBO, the leading sports and entertainment cable television company in the US, which has signed a multimillion-dollar deal with Hamed, will intensify its advertising campaign for Hamed's bout at Madison Square Garden.

HBO spent $600,000 last week advertising nationally and this week the expenditure will reach $1 million. The company is hoping that if Hamed, who is shown on hoardings with gloves on fire, does not quite ignite interest, he will "spark" New York boxing fans.

Two 50-foot billboards featuring Hamed dominate Times Square. "Prince Naseem Hamed is over here to do business. Business with HBO," the one looking down on Christmas shoppers streaming up Seventh Avenue from Macy's reads. The other hoarding shows Hamed with Roy Jones, Oscar de la Hoya — two of the best boxers in the world — and Junior Jones, who will be Hamed's next opponent in March. All are signed to HBO.

Hamed and his burning gloves can also be seen on the side of telephone kiosks and buses. In Los Angeles, his face covers the tall wall on Sunset Boulevard. Seth Abraham, the president of HBO, said: "We are very excited to have Naz. We are rolling out a campaign in which you would think Naseem Hamed is running for President. As this is his first appearance in the United States, we are making a very big deal."

Having provided the ideal conditions and the perfect opponent in Kelley, a New Yorker who has a big reputation but, being past his best, is eminently beatable, Abraham took a line from George Cohan, the famous vaudevillian of *Yankee Doodle Dandy* fame, and said: "If you can't make it in New York then you are not going to make it anywhere else in America."

Abraham added: "It's going to take some time to establish Hamed. He is not a household name in the United States and one prize-fight will not establish his credentials. If he wins, it's an ongoing effort. All we can do is advertise and promote; the man has to fight.

"This week we'll find out from ticket sales and from the American boxing community if they spark to the man. We have picked him because he's special. He is a combination of a prize-fighter and Mick Jagger — a rock star with boxing gloves. We have never seen anyone like him here before. [Hector] Camacho was an entertainer, but he didn't really have the ability Hamed has: Jorge Paez had flair, but he was never the full package of showmanship and ability.

"It will be the full extravaganza at Madison Square Garden. This sort of thing has never been done at the Garden before. We're going to see if the American fight audience will accept it. We believe they will."

Ivanisevic finds career at risk over service fault

Tom Walker in Zagreb on the tennis player under threat from presidential crossfire

The sporting obsession of Croatia's ageing and autocratic ruler has touched new levels of irrationality, Franjo Tudjman suggesting that his rift with Goran Ivanisevic can only be healed with a head-to-head on his private tennis court.

The president's bravado has swollen after his alleged victory over Iva Majoli, the winner of the French Open in June, who was also summoned to play Tudjman lest she fall foul of the Zagreb regime. Unfortunately, Ivanisevic, hardly known for a calm temper himself, told Tudjman just what he thought of following suit. "I don't allow anybody to beat me, not God or Jesus, let alone the president. There will be no game," he said.

While seemingly the harmless whims of a dying man — Tudjman, 75, is fighting stomach cancer — the president's meddling is increasingly resented among a population of four million, tired of his insistence that all sporting prowess be harnessed to the flame of nationalism. Nowhere is the antipathy more bitter than on the football terraces of Croatia Zagreb, formerly Dynamo Zagreb but renamed by Tudjman, the club president. The anthems against him have angered him so much that he has banned the former blue and white scarves and flags of Dynamo from the ground.

Ivanisevic's fall from grace began when he fiercely resisted Tudjman's plans to take over his pet business project, the Croatian indoor tournament, and has now risen to the point where his career is threatened. Tudjman has played his trump card, letting Ivanisevic know that he is not exempt from military service. For his part, Ivanisevic has moved the tournament to his native Split, where political resistance to Tudjman is greatest, and withdrawn his services from the Croatia Davis Cup team.

At this juncture, Ivanisevic said that he was approached by an aide of Tudjman, who told him that all might be forgiven if he agreed to play the president.

Festering beneath the dispute is the issue of Ivanisevic's avoidance of military service. Ivanisevic, 26, has always insisted that he is prepared to serve in the army, but has appealed for his call-up to be delayed until the legal age limit — 30 — so that he can maximise his earnings potential. Recently, he opened his heart to the news weekly, *Globus*, revealing the inner turmoil of a national idol who jetted the globe while watching his nation forged through war.

"I know that many died and I know that I could have gone to war," he said. "Frankly speaking, I would have got a bullet in my head within two minutes, and what's the purpose in that? I think I have promoted the State, done more than I could have if I had gone to war."

The emerging Majoli is from Zagreb and has had less chance to revolt against the president. It is scarcely conceivable that she really lost to him, but the details of the game, played on a hidden court in a military complex adjoining one of Tudjman's villas, will never be known.

Tennis has become the symbol of Tudjman's continued vitality and it is not unusual for his entire Cabinet to be dragooned into watching him play. His irrational desire to control sport and fashion it in his image is a symptom of his governmental style, but time is on the side of his opponents. Ivanisevic will probably not have long to wait for change at the top, since few believe Tudjman will survive his new five-year term in office.

Last week, the football fans who followed Zagreb to Spain for a match against Atlético Madrid expressed their feelings with a banner seen by millions of television viewers. "If there was freedom and democracy, then there would be Dynamo and not Croatia," it said.

In a similar vein, Ivanisevic believes that his huge following can beat presidential diktat. "This country can be very evil if it wants," he said. "They can cheat me if they want, but they should know that I am a more important media star than all of them put together. I'll hit them like nobody has before, and then we'll see who the loser is."

'This country can be very evil if it wants to be'

FOR THE RECORD

AMERICAN FOOTBALL

NATIONAL LEAGUE (NFL): San Francisco 34 Denver 17

BASKETBALL

UNI-BALL TROPHY: Leopards 83 Watford Royals 73.
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION (NBA): Boston 100 Philadelphia 83; Toronto 101 Indiana 108; Washington 98 Utah 56; Chicago 111 Phoenix 104; Portland 90 Atlanta 99

BOWLS

DENNY CUP (English Indoor Bowling Association inter-club championship): Fifth round: Avon Valley bt Huntingdon and Godmanchester 83-61; Falcon bt North Walsham 79-77; Cumbria bt Great Aycliffe 74-65; Blackpool Borough bt Boston 77-68; Swindon Westlecot bt Whiteknights 83-65; Moonfleet bt Bodmin 91-58; Cambridge Park bt Crystal Palace 106-52; Portsmouth Victory bt Folkestone 55-70; Darlington bt Sunderland 76-68; South Forest bt York 90-74; Leicester bt Brandon 112-63; Havering bt Wymondham Dell 89-75; Dartford Stone Lodge bt Century 76-66; East Dorset bt Angel (Tonbridge) 84-57; Clevedon bt Gosling 79-66; Teignbridge bt Wellworthy 108-51.
EGHAM TROPHY (All England mixed inter-club championship): Zone quarter-finals: Zone one: Tynedale bt South Shields 70-60; Eldon bt Concordia 77-63; Darlington bt Great Aycliffe 114-53; Sunderland bt Shildon 74-71. Zone two: Cumbria bt Blackpool Borough 86-66; Blackpool Newton Hall bt Owls Mill 91-65; Huddersfield bt Hull 77-71; York bt Ryedale 57-65. Zone three: Scunthorpe bt Spalding 87-66; Lincoln bt Sleaford 74-66; Newark bt South Forest 73-71; Nottingham bt Barwell 95-67. Zone four: City of Ely bt Brandon 90-55; Cambridge Chesterton bt Peterborough 85-61; Kingsthorpe bt Wellingborough 77-67; Luxson Park bt St Neots 84-54. Zone five: Pinewood Park bt County Arts 77-67; North Walsham bt Lakeside 105-64; Acle bt Norfolk 114-50; Wymondham Dell bt Diss 83-66. Zone six: Sudbury bt Felixstowe 90-74; Mid Suffolk bt Pinbygate 93-65; Tilbury bt Colchester 82-65; Essex County bt Towncentre 90-53. Zone seven: Tye Green bt Cheshunt 84-65; Havering bt Barking 77-76; Gladelands bt Century 86-61; Paddington bt Pickett's Lock 101-64. Zone eight: Luton bt Oxford 74-73 (after extra end); Cherwell bt Banbury 77-74; Desborough; Maidenhead bt Stevenage 69-64; Westminster Bradley bt Foxhill 86-73. Zone nine: Rugby Thornfield bt Birmingham 89-73; Avon Valley bt Erdington Court 84-75; Bentham bt Swindon Westlecot 84-62; Cotswold bt Fairford 82-70. Zone ten: Cambridge Park bt Mote Valley 106-59; King George Field bt Elmbridge 81-64; Croydon bt Cyphers 79-62; Temple bt Donyngs 85-80. Zone eleven: Wey Valley bt Egham 68-58; Whiteknights bt Loddon Vale 92-72; Camberley bt Rushmoor 88-79, Longmeadow bt Rivermead 100-61. Zone twelve: Mote Park bt Folkestone 100-63; Oyster bt Prince Arthur 82-78; Dartford Stone Lodge bt Deangate Ridge 88-79, Royal Tunbridge Wells bt North Kent 108-60. Zone thirteen: Worthing bt Grettons 89-88; Egerton Park bt Horsham 80-71. Worthing Pavilion bt Langley Sports 108-48; Eastbourne bt Wealden 77-89. Zone fourteen: Banister Park bt Arun 99-77; Solent bt Five Rivers 90-87. Dorchester bt Wellworthy 89-45; Moonfleet bt Bournemouth 90-71. Zone fifteen: Bristol bt Yate 87-81; Northavon bt North Wilts 109-65; Donyatt bt Taunton Deane 78-67. Bridgwater bt Victoria (Street) 94-73. Zone sixteen: Torbay bt Torquay 94-71; Iaca bt Exmouth Madeira 116-64; Newquay bt Plymouth Mayflower 82-55. Plymouth CS bt West Cornwall 91-71

CRICKET

Women's World Cup

England v Ireland

PUNE (England won toss): England beat Ireland by 208 runs

ENGLAND

C Edwards not out	173
J Britin c Dawson b O'Neill	37
B Daniels c Pratt b Grealey	4
S Metcalfe st Dawson b Biggs	29
†J Cassar not out	50
Extras (b 6, lb 12, w 10, nb 3)	31
Total (3 wkts, 50 overs)	324

S Redfern, C Taylor, *K Smithies, L MacLeod, K Leng and M Reynard did not bat

FALL OF WICKETS: 1-72, 2-85, 3-193

BOWLING: McDonald 10-1-41-0; Pratt 4-0-40-0; Spence 5-0-39-0; O'Neill 10-1-34-1; Grealey 8-0-51-1; Biggs 7-0-49-1; Shillington 6-0-52-0.

IRELAND

N Squire b Redfern	0
L Biggs b Reynard	49
*M Grealey b Redfern	0
C O'Leary st Cassar b Smithies	14
C O'Neill run out	8
G Leahy lbw b MacLeod	0
†S Dawson c Britin b Reynard	12
C Shillington st Cassar b Reynard	1
A Spence b Reynard	4
D Pratt c Metcalfe b Leng	0
B McDonald not out	0
Extras (lb 4, w 23, nb 1)	28
Total (41.1 overs)	116

FALL OF WICKETS: 1-2, 2-2, 3-30, 4-47, 5-50, 6-94, 7-104, 8-113, 9-115.

BOWLING: Redfern 6-2-6-2; Taylor 7-1-18-0; Smithies 10-0-30-1; MacLeod 5-0-16-0; Leng 9-0-37-1; Reynard 4.1-1-6-4

Umpires: T Handu and A Chatpande

OTHER MATCH: New Delhi: Australia 412-3 (B Clark 229 not out, K Rolton 64, L Keightley 60); Denmark 49. Australia win by 363 runs.

TOUR MATCH (final day of four): Devonport: Tasmania 535-5 dec and 147-7 dec; South Africans 402-8 dec and 94-2 (J H Kallis 51 not out). Match drawn

FOOTBALL

AVON INSURANCE COMBINATION: First division: Arsenal 5 Ipswich 1; Crystal Palace 1 Luton 2; Millwall 0 Charlton 4; Queens Park Rangers 4 Portsmouth 1
GERMAN CUP: Quarter-final: Eintracht Trier 1 Waldhof Mannheim 0
CONFEDERATIONS' CUP: Saudi Arabia 1 Australia 0 (in Riyadh)

Monday's late results

FA CARLING PREMIERSHIP: Manchester United 1 Aston Villa 0.
FA CUP: Second-round replay: Stevenage Borough 2 Cambridge United 1 (Stevenage away to Swindon Town)
UNIBOND LEAGUE: Premier division: Hyde 3 Spennymoor 2
RYMAN LEAGUE: Premier division: Purfleet 2 Harrow 2.
AVON INSURANCE COMBINATION: First division: Chelsea 2 Wimbledon 2.
PONTIN'S LEAGUE: First division: Huddersfield 0 Middlesbrough 1; Sunderland 2 Manchester City 1. Second division: Lincoln 2 Bradford 3; Sheffield Utd 1 Rotherham 2. Third division: Newcastle 3 Hull 0
PORTUGUESE LEAGUE: Setubal 2 Sporting Lisbon 0
THE TIMES FA YOUTH CUP: Second round: Ipswich 4 Great Wakering 0; Woking 1 Gillingham 2
ARGENTINIAN LEAGUE: Racing 2 Platense 1, Ferro Carril Oeste 1 Estudiantes 2

HANDBALL

BERLIN: Women's world championship: Final: Denmark 33 Norway 20

ICE HOCKEY

NATIONAL LEAGUE (NHL): Florida 2 Boston 6; Montreal 1 Philadelphia 3, Dallas 8 Buffalo 4; St Louis 1 Ottawa 3, Colorado 3 Toronto 2; Vancouver 7 Los Angeles 0

NORDIC SKIING

STEAMBOAT SPRINGS, Colorado: World Cup event: 1, M Stecher (Austria) 37min 52.5sec; 2, B E Vik (Nor) at 39.7sec; 3, T Lodwick (US) 46.8; 4, S Lajunen (Fin) at 1min 11.4sec; 5, L Rygl (Cz) 1:11.4

REAL TENNIS

MORETON MORRELL: National 15-19 handicap championship: First round: A Hamilton bt C Rotheroe 6-5, 6-5; R McNaughton bt S Jones 6-5, 6-3. Semi-finals: P Lumley bt A Knibbs 2-6, 6-1, 6-4; Hamilton bt McNaughton 6-5, 6-2. Final: Lumley bt Hamilton 5-6, 6-5, 6-1

RUGBY UNION

THE TIMES STUDENTS EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIP: Pool one: Durham University 36 Trinity College, Dublin 10; Swansea University 35 Roma 12 (both at Kingston Park, Newcastle). Pool two: Toulouse University 70 Northumbria University 14; Loughborough University 25 University College, Dublin 24 (both at Toulouse RFC). Pool four: University College, Cork 40 Cardiff Medicals 18 (at Mardyke)

SHOOTING

BISLEY: British Pistol Club Christmas meeting: Rapid fire: 1, D Warner 280pts; 2, D Johnstone 275; 3, A Szulc 274. Standard pistol: 1, R Everitt 278; 2, D Johnstone 276; 3, D Robinson 272. Women: 1, B Barber 283; 2, B Young 279; 3, L Ashcroft 201. Sport pistol: 1, Everitt 280; 2, Szulc 280; 3, Johnstone 280 (after countback). Free pistol: 1, M Barnes 261.

SKIING

SESTRIERE, Italy: World Cup slalom: 1, F C Jagge (Nor) 1min 51.43sec (56.35sec/55.08sec); 2, T Sykora (Austria) 1:51.77 (56.27/55.50); 3, H-P Buraas (Nor) 1:51.85 (57.05/54.80); 4, A Tomba (It) 1:52.05 (57.50/54.55); 5, M Hansson (Swe) 1:52.24 (56.76/55.48).

SPEED SKATING

HAMAR, Norway: World Cup event: Men: 5,000m: 1, K Storelid (Nor) 6min 34.40sec; 2, K Shirahata (Japan) 6:35.21; 3, G Romme (Ht) 6:36.16; 4, R Hereide (Nor) 6:37.66; 5, R de Jong (Holl) 6:38.14. Women: 1,500m: 1, E Hunyady (Austria) 1min 59.28sec; 2, C Pechstein (Ger) 1:59.74; 3, C Witty (US) 2:00.90; 4, T de Jong (Holl) 2:01.43; 5, A Friesinger (Ger) 2:01.54

SQUASH

NATIONAL SUPER LEAGUE CUP: First round: Duffield 2 Rowlands Manchester 1; Armourcoat Priory 1 ICL Lionhearts 2; Bishop's Stortford 0 Surbiton 3; Dunraven Maesteg 3 Cardiff Institute 0, Hallamshire 1 Halifax Insurance 2

WINDSURFING

PERTH: World championships: Mistral class: Men: 1, A McIntosh (NZ) 58pts; 2, A Inbar (Isr) 72; 3, J Rodrigues (Por) 76 (third on countback); 4, J-P Tobin (NZ) 76; 5, M Galvan (Arg) 77. Women: 1, Lai-Shan Lee (HK) 38pts; 2, A Sensini (It) 39; 3, B Kendall (NZ) 44; 4, N Sturgess (Aus) 75; 5, C Zhang (China) 100

TODAY'S FIXTURES

FOOTBALL

Kick-off 7.30 unless stated
** denotes all-ticket*

European under-21 championship
Qualifying play-off
Second leg
England (0) v Greece (2)
(at Norwich City FC, 7.45)

FA Carling Premiership
Newcastle v Derby (7.45)

FA Cup
Second-round replays
Emley v Lincoln
(at Huddersfield Town FC, 7.45)
* Ilkeston v Scunthorpe (7.45)

Spalding Cup
Quarter-final
Gateshead v Morecambe (7.45)

DR MARTENS LEAGUE: Cup: Second round: Redditch v Bilston Tn.
RYMAN LEAGUE: Full Members Cup: Second round: Leyton Pennant v Grays. Associate Members Trophy: Second round: Ford Utd v Edgware.
UNIBOND LEAGUE: Cup: Third round: Bishop Auckland v Belper Town; Winsford v Lancaster
THE STAR LEINSTER SENIOR CUP: Quarter-final: Monaghan v Burren Celtic (7.45)
AVON INSURANCE COMBINATION: First division: Oxford Utd v Norwich (at Witney Town FC). Swindon v Brighton (7.15). Tottenham v West Ham (at Leyton Orient).
PONTIN'S LEAGUE: Premier division: Nottingham Forest v Everton (7.0); Tranmere v Blackburn (7.0). First division: Bolton v Coventry (at Leigh RMI, 7.0); Oldham v Grimsby (at Stalybridge Celtic FC, 7.0), West Bromwich v Port Vale (at Halesowen Town FC, 7.0). Second division: Burnley v Blackpool (7.15); Carlisle v Shrewsbury (at Gretna FC, 7.0), Rochdale v Barnsley (7.0). Third division: Chester v Scarborough (7.0); Wigan v Walsall (7.0), Chesterfield v Doncaster (7.0)
SCREWFIX DIRECT LEAGUE: Premier division: Chippenham v Backwell; Taunton v Calne. Les Phillips Cup: First round: Bridgwater v Elmore, Crediton v Glastonbury
MINERVA SPARTAN SOUTH MIDLANDS LEAGUE: O'Brien Butchers premier division Cup: First round, first leg: Brache Sparta v Potters Bar; Letchworth v Hanngey; Milton Keynes v Hillingdon Borough, Welwyn Garden v Bedford
ENDSLEIGH INSURANCE MIDLAND COMBINATION: Premier division: Worcestero v Kings Heath
HIGHLAND LEAGUE: Fraserburgh v Elgin (6.0); Lossiemouth v Brora; Peterhead v Deveronvale.
BANK'S BREWERY LEAGUE: Cup: Second round, second leg: Stafford Tn v Stourport S
UNIJET SUSSEX COUNTY LEAGUE: First division: Mile Oak v Selsey. John O'Hara Cup: Third round: Lancing v East Preston
THE TIMES FA YOUTH CUP: Second round replay: Brentford v Swansea, Arsenal v Exeter, Wimbledon v Chelsea
NORTHERN COUNTIES EAST LEAGUE: Cup: Third round: Denaby v Hall Road, Wolcbrough Bridge v Curzon Ashton.

OTHER SPORT

BASKETBALL: Men's National Cup: Semi-final, second leg: Birmingham Bullets (55) v Thames Valley Tigers (63) (7.0).

THE TIMES
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SHEEHAN on BRIDGE

By Robert Sheehan, Bridge Correspondent

I conclude this series on splinters with a cautionary tale. In an uninterrupted auction it's clear enough which bids are splinters, but when the opponents intervene there can be confusion. The sensible agreement to have is that splinters are "off" after intervention, except if made in the opponents' suit(s).

Dealer North **Love all** **Rubber bridge**

North:
♠ A J 7 5
♥ K J 6 3
♦ K Q 7 2
♣ J

West:
♠ Q 9
♥ 9 7 5
♦ 8 3
♣ K Q 9 7 5 3

East:
♠ 10 3 2
♥ A Q 10 4
♦ —
♣ A 10 8 6 4 2

South:
♠ K 8 6 4
♥ 8 2
♦ A J 10 9 6 5 4
♣ —

W	N	E	S
—	1 D	Double	4 C
Double	Pass	4 D	5 C
Pass	Pass (!)	Pass	

Contract: Five Clubs (sic) by South. *Lead: seven of clubs*

I was North. If East had passed over One Diamond, then South's Four Clubs would have been a splinter bid, showing short clubs and diamond support. After the double, my interpretation was that Four Clubs was natural and pre-emptive.

Luckily West's double gave us another chance — had he passed he would have defended Four Clubs. When South bid Five Clubs over East's Four Diamonds it was abundantly clear to everyone at the table (except me) that he was showing shortage.

If South's first bid had been natural, he certainly would not have gone on to Five Clubs in the face of West's double of Four Clubs. So I should have realised that the repeat of clubs showed a void.

With communication in clubs, the defence took eleven tricks in Five Clubs — nine down for 450 to East-West. If we had bid Five Diamonds they would presumably have sacrificed in Six Clubs for one down, so my error cost 550 points.

There was a saving grace, though: we then picked up three laydown slams, bid two of them, and won a 28-point rubber.

☐ Robert Sheehan writes on bridge Monday to Friday in Sport and in the Weekend section on Saturday.

KEENE on CHESS

By Raymond Keene
Chess Correspondent

British wins

Two British grandmasters have won through to the fourth round of the Fide championship in Groningen, Holland. Although Matthew Sadler was eliminated by Alexei Dreev, of Russia, both Nigel Short and Michael Adams won their third-round matches. Adams eliminated Tiviakov, of Russia, by 1½-½ while Nigel Short overwhelmed Andrei Sokolov, also of Russia, 2-0.

The event has been notable for the early disappearance of many of the favourites, including Vassily Ivanchuk, Veselin Topalov and Judit Polgar. The reigning Fide champion, Anatoly Karpov, is already assured of a place in the final. Garry Kasparov and Vladimir Kramnik, the world's No 1 and No 2 players, have both boycotted the Fide tournament since they object to the sudden death nature of the competition.

Here is Short's second win against Sokolov.

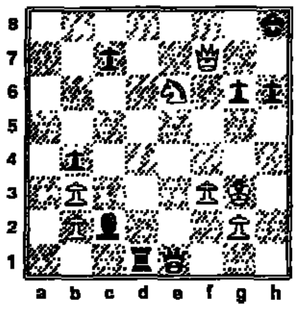
White: Andrei Sokolov
Black: Nigel Short
Fide world championship
Groningen, December 1997

Ruy Lopez

1	e4	e5
2	Nf3	Nc6
3	Bb5	a6
4	Ba4	Nf6
5	0-0	b5
6	Bb3	Bc5
7	a4	Bb7
8	d3	0-0
9	Nc3	Na5
10	Nxe5	Nxb3
11	cxb3	d5
12	Bg5	dxe4
13	dxe4	Re8
14	Bxf6	Qxf6
15	Nd7	Qe7
16	Nxc5	Qxc5
17	axb5	axb5
18	Rxa8	Rxa8
19	Re1	h6
20	h3	b4
21	Na4	Qe7
22	Qc1	Ra5
23	f3	Re5
24	Rd1	f5
25	exf5	Rxf5
26	Re1	Qd6
27	Re8+	Kf7
28	Re3	Rd5
29	Qc4	Ba6
30	Qe4	Bb5
31	Re1	Bd7
32	Rc1	Be6
33	Qc2	Kg8
34	Nc5	Rd2
35	Qe4	Bxh3
36	Qe8+	Kh7
37	Qe4+	g6
38	Rc2	Rd1+
39	Kf2	Bf5
40	Qc4	Bxc2
41	Qf7+	Kh8
42	Ne6	Qd2+
43	Kg3	Qe1+

White resigns

Diagram of final position



☐ Raymond Keene writes on chess Monday to Friday in Sport and in the Weekend section on Saturday.

WORD-WATCHING

By Philip Howard

VAVASOUR
a. A banner
b. Feudal rank
c. Old-tyme dancing

NEUTRINO
a. An atomic particle
b. A newborn mule foal
c. Song from a Thirties musical

PENTHEMIMER
a. An anaesthetist
b. Classical verse form
c. A marionette

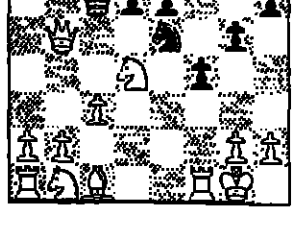
PEAU-DE-SOIE
a. A chamber pot
b. A nightcap
c. Material

Answers on page 42

WINNING MOVE

By Raymond Keene

Black to play. This position is from the game Thomas — Horne, Hastings 1948. Although Black's queen is pinned and attacked, he found a clever combination to exploit the position of White's queen. What was the key move? This year's Hastings is from December 29 to January 7 at the Cinque Ports Hotel. Details are available on 01424 431970.



Solution on page 42

Nottingham counting the cost of its glory years

Alan Pearey on a rugby union club learning the art of survival after falling on hard times

"Don't forget we're all part of a team here," says a member of the Nottingham coaching staff to the ball-boys before the league game against Liverpool St Helens. "So if a Liverpool player wants to take a quick throw, hang on to the ball."

Desperate times call for desperate measures. Nottingham, one of the top six clubs in England in the early nineties, are in crisis. With no money, no sponsor, no millionaire benefactor and no crowd to speak of, their precarious league position (tenth in the first division of the Jewson National League) is an irrelevance. They cannot pay their players and have had to contact insolvency specialists for advice.

So much for Cliff Brittle's blueprint, *Rugby Restructure 2000*. Nottingham are close to extinction and, according to the club's president, John Cosslett, they are not alone.

"English rugby is a financial disaster waiting to happen," Cosslett said. "People like Sir John Hall have gone in blindly and a lot of clubs have followed. The returns don't equal the wages. I know of one club benefactor who's getting phone calls from another Premiership club trying to offload players because they can't afford them.

"Rugby has no long-term professional future unless there's a huge boost in interest in the game. There aren't enough bums on seats at grounds because people are watching it on TV."

The threat of financial ruin exists at all clubs, even the elite. Leicester, with 14,000 paying members and season-ticket sales exceeding £1.3 million, expect to lose money this year. Nottingham attract barely 300 for league games and even those who turn up do not stay. By 6pm on match days the clubhouse is almost empty; astonishingly, the bar runs at a loss.

A year ago, when the club was close to folding, an anonymous backer — later revealed to be Terry Keeley, who owns a furnishing company near Ilkeston — came forward with £45,000. Keeley promised £100,000 for each of the next five seasons and Nottingham went about recruiting players to arrest a slide that began with demotion from the top division in 1992. But they were relegated again, players jumped ship and, in October, Keeley decided to keep his money.

It was a devastating blow for a club that at the start of the decade could match Bath and Leicester. Nottingham developed three of England's finest goal kickers in Rob Andrew, Dusty Hare and Simon Hodgkinson, together with the likes of Brian Moore, Neil Back, Gary Rees, Chris Oti and Chris Gray.

Opinions vary as to why it all went wrong. One factor was the departure of the England B coach, Alan Davies, to Wales. He had acted as a magnet for prospective international players. The poaching of players by local rivals did not help, although some feel that Nottingham themselves raided neighbouring clubs without troubling to develop their own.

Hodgkinson, now a coach at the club, cites two fundamental reasons for Nottingham's predicament: "First, we didn't cash in on success. There was no foresight, no younger players lining up to replace the older nucleus who had given us good times," he said.

"Second, money. We've dropped two divisions but we're still coming across sides like Worcester, Leeds and London Welsh who have spent fortunes. Last year especially, [in the second division of the Courage Clubs Championship] it was a totally unfair contest."

David Rollo, vice-chairman and commercial manager, is also unhappy. "£100,000 is nothing," he said. "We need a rugby budget of £500,000 to get us into the second division and we need that every year to stay there. Our wage bill is £18,000 a month. Just look at our crowds: where's that money coming from?

"You have a big split between rugby teams and rugby clubs. Nottingham is a rugby club. We have 12 teams from the age of eight up. Newcastle are a team of 28 players and nothing else. What Cliff Brittle must realise is that our end of the food chain needs as much attention as the top end. We should receive money from the RFU according to how many sides we put out."

Happily, the club is not without spirit and the players, none of whom has been fully paid since October, have created a three-tier system to help those most in need. "If anything, we've more motivation because we're doing it for ourselves," said Glen Delaney, the captain and one of more than 20 semi-professionals on the club books.

"We've agreed to play on the understanding that money will come. We've put our trust in the committee and they're delivering."

The "delivering" is Nottingham's latest plan to stay in business. The club's Beeston ground is worth more than their liabilities. When Keeley pulled out, the club had two options: sell the ground immediately on a "same usage" basis, or sell it later with planning permission attached. The club chose the second option.

"We need £500,000," Cosslett said. "Wilson Homes have the option to buy the ground and would give us that much now. But we could get a *guaranteed* £1½ million [in contract] if we sold it with planning permission. Our plan is to put together a consortium. About 40 people have shown interest and we're *more than* confident we can raise half-a-million.

"The club members would also have a stake and put money in. They would get a return on their investment when the *land* was sold. If, say, we got half-a-million now and then sold the ground in three years' time, we might have to return, say, £1 million."

That Nottingham will sell their ground and share with a local club is inevitable. But the loss of their Beeston home, where they have resided since 1904, is a small price to pay to stay afloat. Negotiations are progressing well and the club hopes to confirm that it will become a limited company at a special general meeting next month.

"The first team has bags of potential. If rugby remains professional, these young players are growing assets," Cosslett said. "By developing good players and selling them on, you can sit at the main table. The situation is so rocky, but if we can still be here in three years' time, we'll be in a strong position."

The stars who left: Moore, left, and Andrew . . .

. . . and those who stayed: Rees, right, and Hodgkinson

NOTTINGHAM'S BUDGET, 1997-98

The club originally had a break-even budget for the present financial year with revenue estimated at £400,000. But the figures have been upset by the loss of Terry Keeley's expected £100,000 investment and a shortfall of £22,000 from BSkyB income, after confusion over a payment to the club.

INCOME		EXPENDITURE	
Sponsorship, gate receipts, special events	£75,000	Wages (including players and coaches)	£230,000
RFU subsidy	£92,000	Administration (eg insurance, auditors)	£65,000
BSkyB	£86,000	Ground costs	£30,000
Wilson Homes (option on ground)	£25,000	Rugby costs (eg bus hire, kit, meals etc)	£75,000
Total	£278,000	Total	£400,000

RUGBY UNION

Geoghegan ready to relaunch his career against Pau

By Mark Souster

A FOOT injury has interrupted Simon Geoghegan's career on a number of occasions but he is expected to dip his toe — the one that has caused him such aggravation and pain — back into the waters of professional rugby on Saturday. The months of trials and tribulations would appear to be at a close after the Ireland wing was named yesterday in the Bath squad to play Pau in the semi-finals of the Heineken Cup.

If Adedayo Adebayo fails a fitness test on Friday, then Geoghegan will start only his thirteenth match for the club since moving to the Recreation Ground from London Irish three years ago. Should his colleagues, who are still coming to terms with their record defeat by Saracens on Sunday, require inspiration for the semi-final, they need look no further than Geoghegan.

He has undergone nine operations on foot injuries — three on the left foot and six on the right — and was forced to endure repeated setbacks as he sought a cure for his complaint. Three times he crossed the Atlantic for operations, twice to San Diego and, this autumn, to Seattle. Planned comebacks were postponed, the British Isles tour to South Africa last summer was missed and his international career was put on hold.

The doubters questioned whether he would or could play again, and in the darker moments Geoghegan, a 29-year-old London solicitor, must have harboured similar thoughts and wondered whether he should call time on a dazzling but all-too-brief career that included 37 caps for Ireland.

The most recent operation was needed after playing for Bath United at Ebbw Vale on September 23. The pain in the big toe of his right foot that has dogged him returned. The operation was deemed a success, and, although the toe will never be perfect, it is as good as it will be.

"It has been a nightmare; so frustrating because the rest of my body has been fine. I still think I can play at the top level and, with Jon Sleightholme leaving [Bath, to join Northampton], I am certain I will get an opportunity. I know the foot will always be painful but it is just one of those things you learn to put up with," Geoghegan said.

Apart from Geoghegan's recovery, Andy Robinson, the Bath coach, received more welcome news yesterday when it was confirmed that Mike Catt would play against Pau. Catt completes a mandatory 21-day rest period this week having been concussed playing for England against South Africa last month.

He replaces Richard Butland at fly half and Mark Regan comes in for Andy Long at hooker. Eric Peters makes way in the back row for Richard Webster. "I rate this the biggest game in our history," Robinson said.

Off the field, three of the four working parties set up by the English Rugby Partnership today will submit their reports — on marketing and communications, a structured season and finance — to the board of English First Division Rugby.

France have reacted in typical fashion to their record defeat by South Africa by omitting nine players, among them Philippe Saint-Andre, the captain, and Abdélatif Benazzi, his predecessor, from a squad session next week to prepare for the five nations' championship.

Pierre Villepreux, the assistant coach, insisted that those nine players, who also include the Harlequins pair of Thierry Lacroix and Laurent Cabannes, had not been dropped. "This does not mean these players have finished their careers for France. We simply want to take the opportunity to bring in as many players as possible to our planning," he said.

Hospital report says Jones is comfortable

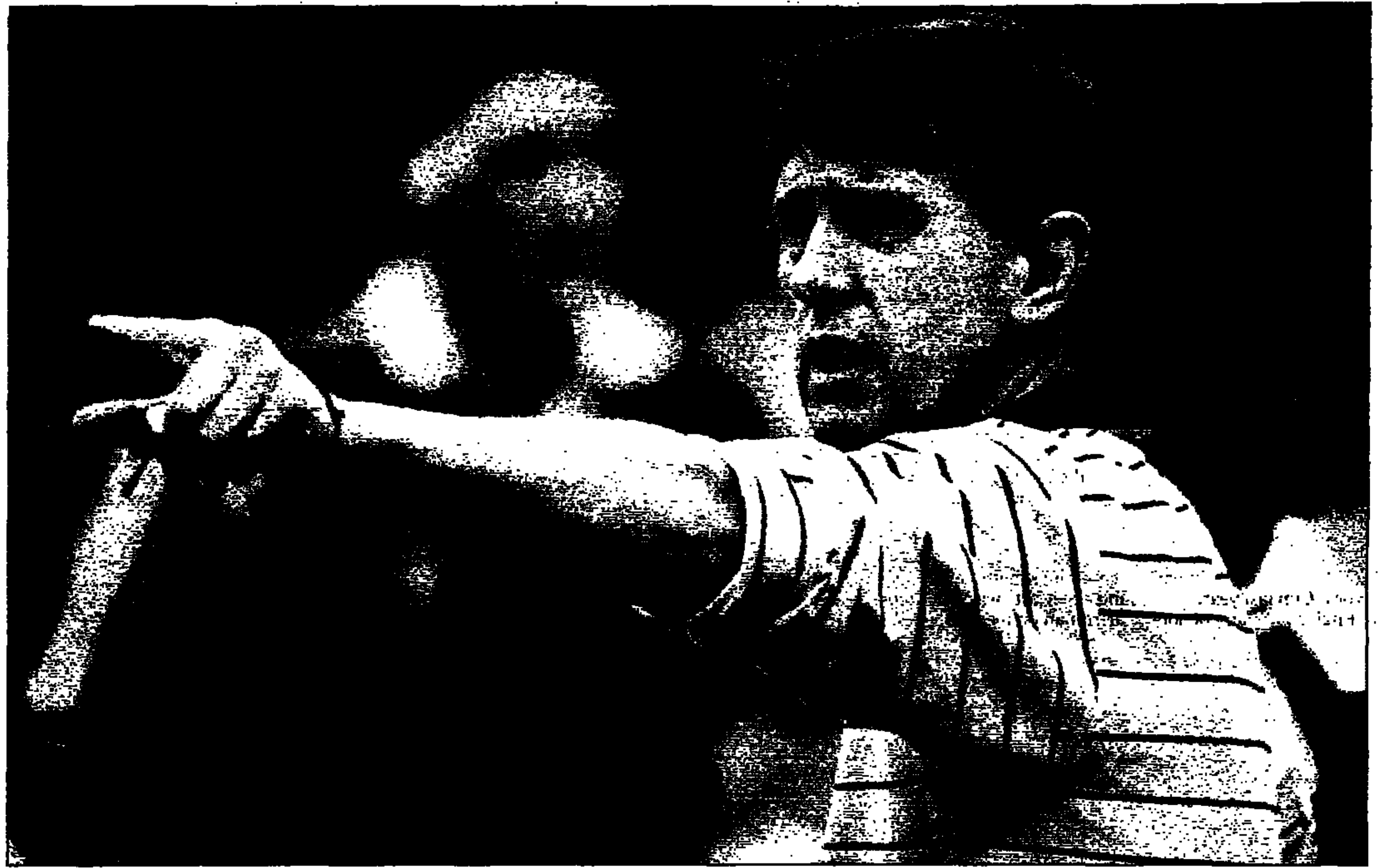
GWYN JONES, the Wales captain, was said to be "comfortable" yesterday at the University Hospital of Wales after an operation to ease the pressure on his spine.

The Cardiff flanker, who was rushed to hospital on Saturday after being badly hurt in the Welsh League match against Swansea, suffered an injury to his spinal cord and was left without movement in his arms and legs.

"The hospital has confirmed Gwyn Jones had an operation this morning as planned. He is now in a comfortable position on the ward," a spokesman said.

"At the present time his medical team are unable to give any further indication of his likely long-term improvement."

The Cardiff club's chief executive, Gareth Davies, who visited Jones before the operation said: "Gwyn is in remarkably good spirits considering what he's been through. He's been helped by the support he's received from his friends, colleagues and the general public."



Fleming has pointed the way to a new, fully-professional approach to refereeing rugby. Photograph: David Rogers/Allsport

Fleming presses for full-time referees

Kevin Ferrie finds the official who recently took centre stage at Twickenham has strong views on the future for men in the middle

The man who received much of the credit for the classic drawn match between England and New Zealand last month, referee Jim Fleming, yesterday called for refereeing to become a full-time profession after the 1999 World Cup.

The Twickenham performance of Fleming — combining firmness and commonsense — helped to demonstrate that there need not be anything preventing northern and southern hemispheres from competing on even terms.

Fleming admitted to being physically and mentally drained after the match and suggested that unrealistic expectations were being made of part-time referees. The point was brought home to him when he returned to London last weekend to take charge of Harlequins v Wasps.

"I was speaking to Lawrence Dallaglio and Jason Leonard after the game and they said it had taken them until the Tuesday or Wednesday to get over such a physical game. They are a good deal younger than I am," he said.

Fleming, 46, was back in his office at Edinburgh City Council on the Monday after the England game. He will take charge of his 30th international when France face Ireland during the five nations' championship in the spring and knows that it is too late for his generation to harbour ambitions about becoming fully professional.

"At our stage most people have career structures set and it would not be worth their while, but we must push for the appointment of full-time referees after the World Cup and look for younger people to bring through," he said. "If I were in my early thirties I would see it as a great opportunity.

"We should have a squad of referees who are constantly liaising not only with one another, but with the International Board, players and coaches as well," he said.

He pointed out that five such appointments in Australia and three in New Zealand have already been made and that the increasing number of high-profile northern hemisphere matches, particularly following the introduction of the Heineken Cup, means the demand now exists in Europe. That in turn has helped to reinforce in Fleming's own mind the effect that turning his demanding hobby into a profession could have.

"I am probably performing better than at any time in my career, which I believe is because the European Cup has meant I've been operating at a higher level throughout the season so far."

Fleming was speaking after being appointed to the International Rugby Football Board's 13-man panel for the five nations' championship, which has made up for his surprising omission from the nine-man group put in place on a similar basis for the Super 12 competition last season.

"I was extremely disappointed that I wasn't on that panel because I thought I was refereeing well enough," he said. He is optimistic that the group can have a positive impact on improving the appeal of rugby.

He explained that the 13 officials will have a video conference, from bases in both hemispheres, to discuss how they intend to approach refereeing the championship.

He also believes that they can build on that to have a longer-term influence on how the laws and their interpretations can be improved to allow both players and spectators to understand decisions more easily.

Fleming had a message for the players who blame officials for the poor quality of entertainment frequently on offer in the British club game. "What it comes down to is the *attitude* of players, coaches and, yes, referees," he said. "We all have to be on the same wavelength."

SNOW REPORTS

	Depth (cm) L	Depth (cm) U	Conditions Piste	Conditions Off/p	Runs to resort	Weather (5pm)	°C	Last snow
AUSTRIA								
Kitzbuhel	20	80	good	powder	fair	sun	-5	15/12
(Very good skiing on open pistes: 18/60 lifts open)								
Obergurgl	70	110	good	powder	good	sun	-7	15/12
(Excellent skiing conditions: dry, powdery snow)								
FRANCE								
Chamonix	5	70	fair	varied	closed	fair	-1	13/12
(Limited skiing at the moment: 45cm snow at 2,000m)								
Tignes	60	130	good	varied	fair	cloud	-14	15/12
(Good skiing on well-prepared pistes)								
Val d'Isère	40	60	good	varied	art	cloud	-8	15/12
(46/100 lifts and 45/133 pistes open: good at altitude)								
Val Thorens	40	90	good	varied	fair	fair	-9	14/12
(Cold weather maintaining good snow)								
ITALY								
Cortina	20	90	good	varied	art	cloud	-3	15/12
(Good skiing on available pistes: 18/40 lifts open)								
NORWAY								
Geilo	30	35	fair	varied	fair	fair	-9	12/12
(Open pistes well-maintained and skiing well)								
SWITZERLAND								
C Montana	5	40	fair	powder	closed	fair	-6	14/12
(30cm of snow at 2,200m — best above this altitude)								
Klosters	45	105	good	powder	fair	fine	-7	14/12
(Very good early-season skiing)								
Wengen	25	50	fair	powder	fair	fine	-3	15/12
(Plenty of decent skiing available: 10/20 lifts open)								

Source. Ski Club of Great Britain. L - lower slopes; U - upper; art - artificial.

SNOOKER: CHAIRMAN OF GOVERNING BODY SEES AN END TO ACRIMONY

Williams puts forward peace policy

By Our Sports Staff

REX WILLIAMS, chairman of the World Professional Billiards and Snooker Association, yesterday attempted to call a truce on the infighting in his sport prior to a potentially acrimonious annual meeting on Friday.

Jim McKenzie was dismissed from his post of chief executive at the start of the month and Ian Doyle, who manages many of the game's *top stars, has already pledged* to try to overthrow Williams, while McKenzie is to sue his former employers, whom he has described as amateurs, for breach of contract.

Stephen Hendry, six times the world champion, also attacked the decision to remove McKenzie, claiming the sport was "poison from top to bottom". Williams, though, who attended a meeting yesterday of many of the leading players and managers in the sport, remains confident about the immediate future. Williams said: "This was a thoroughly constructive meeting at which many aspects of the game were discussed confidentially by players and managers alike. *I am now delighted that* we can finally draw a line under the past and look forward to a sustained period of increased dynamism and prosperity.

Williams was backed by Steve Davis, the former world No 1, and pleaded with the leading figures to work together to take the sport forward. Davis said: "Snooker really does not need any more problems than it has at present and talk of breakaway groups or the like is total madness.

"Sanity must prevail and after having effectively appointed the new board just a few months ago, I am of the belief to give the current board a chance to do what they can *for the sport. I am happy to* give Rex Williams and his colleagues on the WPBSA board my 100 per cent support."

John Higgins, who won the *German Open in Bingen* at the weekend, has called for the tournament to remain on the snooker calendar. The WPBSA has reached the end *of its three-year contract* with Eurosport and negotiations must take place in order to clinch a repeat booking.

"The crowds have been brilliant and the venue has been great," said Higgins, who received a standing ovation from a full house at the Atlantis Rheinhotel after his 9-4 victory over John Parrott in the final.

Jim Storey, director for *Trans World International*, the snooker production company, echoed the Scottish player's comments. "Every player we have interviewed this week says this tournament must come back to Bingen," Storey said. "Television needs a good backdrop and a good atmosphere. We had both in Bingen."

BASKETBALL

Finger points the way for Bullets' revival

MIKE FINGER, the Birmingham Bullets coach, believes that his side's recent record against Thames Valley proves that they can overturn an eight-point deficit in their National Cup semi-final home leg today.

Success will depend on containing Tony Holley, the Tigers forward, who continues *to tear up* the Budweiser League with averages of 22 points and almost 14 rebounds per game.

"We match up well in most positions, but they obviously *have* an advantage at power-forward with Tony on offence," Finger said. "We're going into it like it's half-time and we're down by eight. We were down 20 last time they came up here and cut it back to two but still lost. We know eight is a deficit we can overcome and *just need to* make sure we don't try to get it back all at once."

Finger will alternate Fabulous Flournoy and Clive Allen against Holley, who believes the way to exploit the Birmingham defence is through their rookies — Chris Haslam, the centre, and H L Coleman, the forward. "I think that's where we have the advantage," Holley said.

Bullets, who lost the first leg 63-55, welcome back Nigel Lloyd, the point-guard, who missed the game because of a hand injury.

هكذا من الأهل

هكذا من الإصل

Equine confrontation that underlined age-old truth

SIMON BARNES

Midweek View

How splendid it was to see, as I travelled across London, the Tube stations and escalators once more converted to a shrine to Torvill and Dean. As they begin their latest showbiz tour, they are, apparently, quite unchanged, save that the nasty mauvey-purple of the fluttering *Bolero* costume has been moderated by time into a nasty shade of tangerine.

Mixing in equal measure beauty and absurdity, sumptuous skill and high kitsch, competitive will and a dream of artistic endeavour, they gave delight without stinting. And their last Olympic performance, rewarded by the infamous and undeserved bronze, gained the biggest British television audience ever gathered to a sporting event.

Sport? Well, I have long defended T and D, mainly because they were wonderful. I have also defended all the subjectively judged sports (except boxing), and I will go in to bat for ice skating, with all its nonsense, any time it seems to need defending.

But then I found myself reduced to real out-loud public laughter at what must be the funniest piece of writing that *The Times* sports pages have carried all year. Simon Barnes, Lynne Truss, eat your hearts out, because you cannot compete with this: "The world of dance is torn over the Viennese," I read, the Viennese being the waltz rather than the father of psychoanalysis. "Purists worldwide want the dance to remain restricted to four figures, the reverse and natural turns, and the reverse and natural fleckerls." I wouldn't give the time of day to an unnatural fleckerl myself. "They are engaged in heated debate with modernists calling for lifts, curtsies and other figures ..."

This wonderful piece was written by our dance sport specialist, Ruth Gledhill, reviewing a book called *The Viennese Waltz*. A whole book about the Viennese Waltz! It is absurd beyond belief, and I could not restrain an outbreak of delighted laughter over my morning cappuccino.

'To the lover, nothing is less absurd'

To the lover, nothing is less absurd than his passion: to the observer, only the absurd elements can be seen with any clarity. Call that Swann's Law. For of course, it is I, not the lover, that is or am at fault over dance sport.

With clear vision, every other piece in yesterday's *Times* sports pages was just as absurd, or just as wise as this piece on the Viennese waltz. "Stewart sprung forward from his haunches, gathered the ball and flicked it back into the stumps." What have Stewart's haunches to do with truth or beauty?

"United settled into the invigorating rhythm that has been their hallmark ..." "Edmondo, known as The Animal, was not chosen ..." "Large Action, too, will at last be tried over a trip ..."

Anyone who holds any sport absurd is on safe ground. But anyone who holds one sport absurd and another wise is making himself a fool. Dance sport outrages my prejudices, but not my faculty for logic.

There are those that would condemn all the subjectively judged sports, conveniently forgetting that all sports have about them subjective judgment: points in boxing, offside, leg-before and on and on.

And there is the point that subjective judgment of competition is older than formal sport ... older by millions of years.

I witnessed just such a subjectively judged, formal conflict, a trial of mental toughness played to elaborate and complex rules, and subjectively judged by the contestants themselves. The contestants were horses: my young animal, Bullseye, and the herd boss, Rupert.

Facing each other, they made a series of bites at each other's necks: never quite connecting. Competition escalated, because Bullseye is an ambitious young thruster. The two animals made a series of little hops at each other, each threatening to stand on his hind legs and box, but not quite doing so. Then, dramatically, both half-stood, backs at an angle of 45 degrees. No blow was offered, but, as Bullseye landed, he turned away and presented his back end to Rupert.

'The observer sees only the absurd element'

He had withdrawn his offensive threat: replaced it with a defensive threat. OK, Rupe, you win this time. The encounter was bloodless, formal, regulated, subjectively judged.

Subjective judgment is at the heart of the sporting experience. Was there any better, stronger competitor in sport this year than Svetlana Chorkina, the world champion gymnast? I caught the lyrical beauty of her asymmetric bar performance in Glasgow recently, though alas only on television. It was one of the best bits of sport I have seen this year.

Ruth, forgive me. I laughed at dance sport, and I bet I will laugh again. But at least I will do so knowing that I am wrong.

If there is truth in one horse's victory over another, in a field or on a race track, then there is truth in a natural fleckerl.

England opener has opposition stumped all round in one-day game

Stewart sets standards on route to Gulf glory

From Michael Henderson in Sharjah

WHO is the best all-rounder in one-day cricket? Pakistan have Wasim Akram, the best fast bowler in the world and an attacking batsman when the mood takes him. South Africa have Shaun Pollock and Lance Klusener, Jacques Kallis and even Hansie Cronje. No wonder they are winning so many matches.

For India, Saurav Ganguly makes runs quickly and bowls serviceable medium pacers. West Indies have Carl Hooper, whose off spin supplements his bruising batting. Sri Lanka, of course, have Jayasuriya, whose extraordinary exploits at the top of the order did so much to help win the World Cup last year.

In England's team of jobbing all-rounders, though, Alec Stewart stands out as the most important. Stewart has been, without a doubt, the man of this tournament, the key man in the only team to have won every game. They contest the final against West Indies on Friday and, as he points out: "We've got to win it."

As opening batsman and wicketkeeper, he has been in excellent form this past week. He continues to contribute something that is never identified on the scorecard, but which gives the team so much enthusiasm. "I now know that, when England are doing well, Alec Stewart runs the show," Matthew Fleming said after taking four wickets against India on his international debut.

It was in that match that Stewart set the tone of England's performance, timing the ball sweetly from the start, squeezing out singles and twos between the wickets, and stumping Tendulkar. He remains supremely fit and spruce for a man of 34 who has played so much cricket in the past decade. The words on his cricketing crest could well be: every inch the pro.

Against Pakistan on Monday, in a match England could easily have lost, Stewart was at his best, batting well for 48 and then relentless in his vocal support of the bowlers. It must be quite something for a batsman at the crease to have his eardrums battered with volleys of patter. When the match was at its tightest, Stewart was in his element.

It was fitting that he had a hand in the last two wickets, catching Azhar Mahmood when a top-edged drive sent the ball flying into the night sky, then leaping athletically from behind the stumps to run out Saqlain, who had left his crease without checking his bearings. In the 49th over of the innings, with nerves fraying, Stewart was the most alert man on the field.

With Stewart as wicketkeeper, batsman, confidant to the captain, cheerer-up-in-chief and general factotum, England can field an entire team of all-rounders. Of the team that played the other night against Pakistan only Ally Brown, the opening batsman, is not a bowler of any description. Hick and Thorpe have not been called upon to bowl but can do, and both field well.

If England are pinching themselves at the way things have gone, they are entitled. Their cricket has been brimful of purpose and no little skill, even though they like to be known as the team without stars. Dougie Brown, who is improving with the years, and Fleming have enjoyed a marvellous week and Mark Ealham is becoming indispensable in the 50-over game.

Even if England fail to beat West Indies on Friday, all the players involved here can expect to reconvene in April, for the five one-day internationals at the end of the West Indies tour. David Graveney, the Sharjah tour manager, hopes that the party will be announced, and Adam Hollioake appointed leader, just as soon as the team returns to England.

STU FORSTER/ALLSPORT

Williams guides the ball to the leg side during his innings of 105 — his first one-day international century

West Indies secure place in final

From Michael Henderson

SHARJAH (India won toss): West Indies beat India by 41 runs

WEST Indies will meet England in the final of the Champions Trophy on Friday. To deprive them of the opportunity, India had to make 230 in 45 overs, and so overtake them on run rate. For a while they threatened to make the game close until they found, like everybody else this week, that batting last on a wearing pitch is a perilous activity.

There was one astonishing feature of this game: the West Indies pace bowlers failed to take a wicket between them. Hooper gathered four with his gentle off breaks and arm balls, Chanderpaul three with his leg spin and Lewis, who also ran out Tendulkar and Azharuddin from square leg, ended with one. In years to come it might make a good quiz question.

Having been put in to bat by India, who included Dravid as an extra batsman in place of Singh, West Indies were held together by Stuart Williams, who batted through the innings for 105, his first hundred in one-day internationals.

Hooper made 38, and Lara 23, but the way Chauhan, India's second spinner, bowled his off breaks, conceding only 30 runs from his ten overs, and taking two wickets, offered a clue as to how difficult it would be to chase the target.

When India replied, Ganguly was soon finding the boundary square of the wicket, and he greeted Lewis by stepping out to hit him over long-on for six. Sidhu went, searching for the same boundary, but Dravid, promoted above Tendulkar, kept the score ticking along nicely until the innings subsided. Ganguly's wicket was the crucial one so far as West Indies were concerned. Waltzing down the pitch to lift Lewis high and straight, he was beaten so thoroughly by the turning ball that David Williams will have few easier stumpings.

Then, disaster for India, as Tendulkar and Azharuddin, the most accomplished players in the team, risked all on Lewis's arm and lost. They made five runs between them, and their chance went with them. Hooper will enjoy no better match with the ball.

Like Manzoor Akhtar, of Pakistan, the day before he helped himself to four wickets, and when Chanderpaul, the little Trinidad batsman, joined the feast the evening was close to fantasy.

One by one the batsmen swung and missed. The Indians in the crowd did not like it one little bit. Their team came here full of hope and ended the competition without a win. It was all a bit embarrassing.

SCOREBOARD FROM SHARJAH

WEST INDIES

P A Wallace c Ganguly b Srinath	8
S C Williams not out	105
B C Lara c Kumble b Chauhan	23
C L Hooper c Azharuddin b Ganguly	38
S Chanderpaul c Jadeja b Chauhan	16
P V Simmons b Kumble	16
F A Rose b Srinath	14
R N Lewis not out	1
Extras (lb 5, nb 3)	8
Total (6 wkts, 50 overs)	229

†D Williams, M V Dillon and *C A Walsh did not bat.

FALL OF WICKETS: 1-26, 2-63, 3-134, 4-164, 5-202, 6-227.

BOWLING: Srinath 9-1-48-2; Prasad 10-1-39-0; Kumble 10-0-52-1; Chauhan 10-1-30-2; Ganguly 7-0-38-1; Tendulkar 4-0-17-0.

INDIA

S C Ganguly st D Williams b Hooper	70
N S Sidhu c Wallace b Lewis	25
R S Dravid b Hooper	31
*S R Tendulkar run out	1
M Azharuddin run out	4
A Jadeja b Hooper	8
†S S Karim b Chanderpaul	26
A Kumble c and b Chanderpaul	6
J Srinath b Chanderpaul	4
R K Chauhan not out	0
B K V Prasad b Hooper	1
Extras (b 1, lb 5, w 4, nb 2)	12
Total (42.2 overs)	188

FALL OF WICKETS: 1-87, 2-126, 3-127, 4-136, 5-140, 6-182, 7-177, 8-187, 9-187

BOWLING: Walsh 7-1-24-0; Rose 6-0-35-0; Dillon 6-0-30-0; Lewis 10-0-38-1; Hooper 8.2-0-37-4; Chanderpaul 5-0-18-3.

Man of the match: S C Williams.

Umpires: C J Mitchley (South Africa) and B C Cooray (Sri Lanka)

Final positions

	P	W	L	Pts
England	3	3	0	6
West Indies	3	2	1	4
Pakistan	3	1	2	2
India	3	0	3	0

World record for Edwards falls in a day

From Thrasy Petropoulos in Pune

CHARLOTTE EDWARDS gave a masterful display of batting here yesterday, producing an innings that, on any other day, would have seen her enter the record books. One day short of her eighteenth birthday, Edwards batted throughout the England innings for 173 not out against Ireland, comfortably eclipsing the previous highest individual score in World Cup matches.

Just as Edwards was recovering, however, news came through from Bombay that Belinda Clark, the Australia captain, had scored 229 not out in the total of 412 for three, after which Denmark were dismissed for 49 (top score was extras with 12). On the way, Clark scored the fastest one-day century made in women's cricket, reaching three figures off 64 balls and, in all, facing 157.

Both innings left Lindsay Reeler's 143 not out for Australia against Holland at Williton, in 1988, in the shade. Australia's total was also a record, beating the 376 scored by England against Pakistan earlier in this tournament.

Reunited as opening partners, Edwards and Jan Brittin so disrupted the Ireland bowlers' rhythm that by the eighth over four had been used. Brittin started the more fluently, but when she went, caught behind off Catherine O'Neill, Edwards took her cue to open up and display the rich variety of shots she possesses in exploring every corner of the Nehru Stadium.

Barbara Daniels lasted only ten balls before pulling Miriam Grealey straight to midwicket, and Sue Metcalfe, the vice-captain, joined Edwards in the seventeenth over. After her cautious start, Edwards reached 50 off 66 balls with five fours, but she needed only a further 34 to reach three figures, with an additional seven boundaries. It was her second one-day international hundred in her eighth match.

When Metcalfe overbalanced and was stumped down the leg side off Catriona Beggs, the third wicket had yielded 108 runs in one hour, of which Metcalfe's contribution was 29. Battling against exhaustion and repeated bouts of cramp, Edwards's concentration waned on reaching her century. She was twice dropped at square leg, when 110 and 131, and once in the covers on passing 150. Interspersed with weary shots, however, she continued to add to her tally of boundaries, ending with 19.

Joining Edwards for the final 15 overs of the innings was Jane Cassar, who batted with style and intelligence in scoring 50 in an undefeated 131-run partnership for the fourth wicket. By the time the Ireland bowlers were put out of their misery, Edwards's contribution had reached 173 not out off 155 balls in a shade over three hours.

After two fairly lacklustre bowling performances against Pakistan and Denmark, it was vital that England's bowlers showed greater application here. Bowling left-arm seam, Sue Redfern was soon among the wickets. She removed Nikki Square and Grainne Leahy for ducks, reducing Ireland to two for two. From that point, the match meandered aimlessly, wickets falling intermittently before Melissa Reynard polished off the tail with a spell of four for six in 4.1 overs.

So exhausted was Edwards that she was unable to take the field. "I'm absolutely delighted," she said. "I've never batted for 50 overs and I didn't know how many I had when I came off. I didn't know it was a world record until I was told in the changing rooms." The innings was not a world record, but world class it certainly was.

England have maintained their unbeaten record but, having batted first in all six matches on tour, their bowlers are yet to be tested properly. That may count against them when they play Australia in Nagpur tomorrow in the final qualifying match in Pool A.

TABLES

Group A

	P	W	L	NR	Pts
England	4	4	0	0	24
Australia	4	3	0	1	21
South Africa	4	2	2	0	12
Ireland	4	1	2	1	9
Denmark	4	1	3	0	6
Pakistan	4	0	0	4	0

Group B

	P	W	L	NR	Pts
New Zealand	3	3	0	0	18
India	3	2	0	1	15
Sri Lanka	3	1	1	1	9
Holland	3	0	2	1	3
West Indies	4	0	3	1	3

Scoreboard, page 39

Cronje denies tampering with ball

ICC rules prevent any investigation into charge levelled at South Africa captain

HANSIE CRONJE, the South Africa captain, yesterday rebutted an allegation that he had tampered with the ball during the one-day international against Australia in Sydney on December 4.

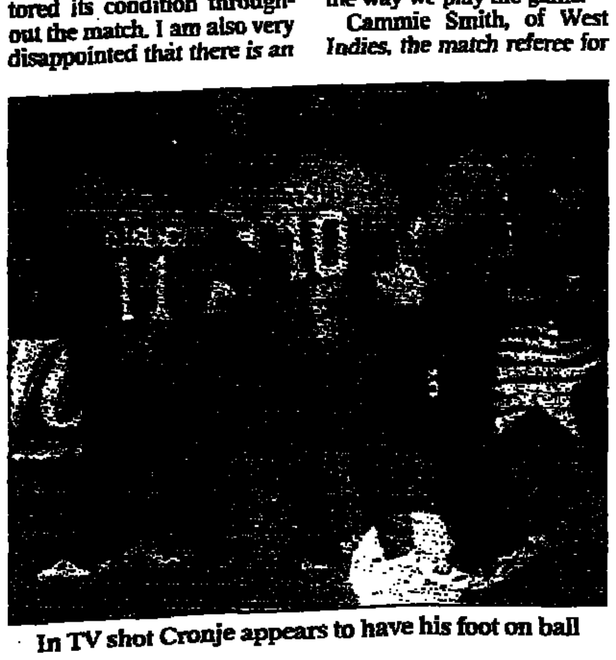
The allegation, made by Kerry Packer's Nine Network, which broadcasts cricket throughout Australia, is that Cronje stood on the ball during a match which South Africa won by 67 runs after bowling Australia out for 133.

In a statement prepared during the final day of his team's game against Tasmania, Cronje said: "According to reports I have received regarding this alleged incident, it took place while the crowd was being brought into order after having thrown objects at my players.

"I can assure all that, at that particular point in time, my main concern and thought was how was I going to handle the situation, regarding whether to take the side off the field or not. The players wanted action and my mind was racing.

"Regarding the ball itself, I would remind all that the umpires consistently monitored its condition throughout the match. I am also very disappointed that there is an insinuation that we tried to gain unfair advantage, which is totally contrary to the way we play the game."

Cammie Smith, of West Indies, the match referee for the game at Sydney, was asked yesterday whether he knew of the incident. "No nothing, nothing whatsoever," Smith said. "In any event that is history now because it was almost two weeks ago ... history."



In TV shot Cronje appears to have his foot on ball

The rules of the International Cricket Council (ICC) say that accusations of ball tampering must be brought to the referee's attention during the course of the match for action to be taken.

The last case of alleged ball tampering at international level was in the Perth Test between Australia and Sri Lanka in 1995, when the Pakistani umpire, Khizar Hayat, accused the Sri Lankans, who were found guilty and, under the rules, were unable to comment in their own defence. The decision was later overturned.

In the Lord's Test between England and South Africa in 1994, the England captain, Michael Atherton, was caught on camera rubbing the ball with dirt from his pocket. He owned up the next day and was fined.

SAILING: SOUTHERN ROUTE MAKES DIFFERENCE FOR TWO WHITBREAD CREWS

Innovative tactics paying dividends

By Edward Gorman
Sailing Correspondent

MARCEL VAN TRIEST, the navigator on *Innovation Kvaerner*, the leader of the Whitbread Round the World race, is sometimes criticised by his rivals for being a "corner-banger": someone prepared to take huge risks by sailing to the edges of the race course.

Van Triest has prospered in this race by being courageous enough to go it alone, convincing his young skipper, Knut Frostad, to accept significant short-term losses for eventual big gains. The strategy has looked not so much reckless or fluky, but an indication of confidence.

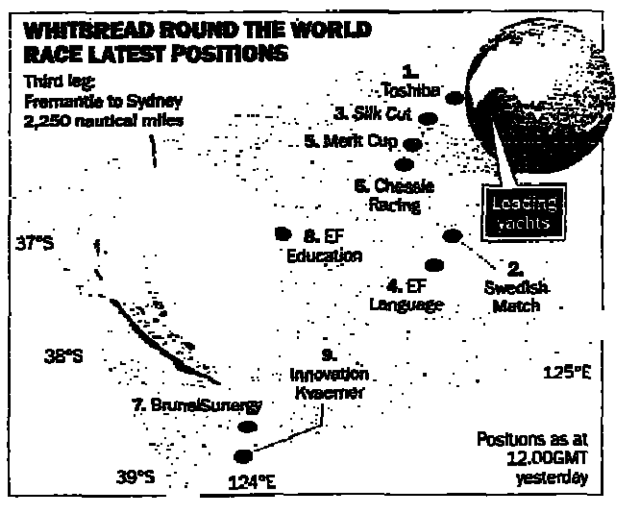
On this third leg, from Fremantle to Sydney, the Dutchman has lived up to his reputation by taking what another skipper referred to yesterday as the "wild card" option. *Kvaerner*, and Roy Heiner on *BrunelSunergy*, have dived south as the fleet bears across the Great Australian Bight in difficult conditions for navigators.

It has been a costly strategy because *Kvaerner* has slipped from fifth to last. Yesterday, though, the long-term gains in fresher conditions and better angles started to come good. The Norwegian boat posted the fastest speed of the day and cut her deficit on the leader almost in half, from 50 miles to 26 miles, in the course of 12 hours.

All the other skippers, including Great Britain's Lawrie Smith on *Silk Cut*, are looking nervously at weather maps and position schedules to see if Van Triest has done it again. Smith's report yesterday was full of speculation about *Kvaerner*, 70 miles south of *Silk Cut* and, at that point, 35 miles astern.

"*Kvaerner's* tactics are very interesting," Smith said. "Maybe she is thinking that she can get south of the advancing high pressure into the westerlies, but the maps and the computer models show that this is a very risky move indeed and fairly unlikely to work. Whatever her thinking, she is likely to do very well or very badly due to the fairly large separation."

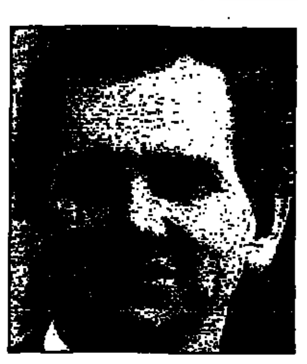
Paul Cayard, on EF Language, who has opted for a more middling course, said: "It is difficult to know where to invest because the weather pattern can change from when you get a satellite picture or weather fax. Subtle changes can make a big difference."



DISTANCE TO FINISH (as at 1200GMT yesterday, with miles to Sydney): 1, Toshiba (US) 1,439.8 miles; 2, Swedish Match (Swe) 1,443.8; 3, Silk Cut (GB) 1,447.8; 4, EF Language (Swe) 1,451.4; 5, Merit Cup (Monaco) 1,451.9; 6, Chessie Racing (US) 1,452.2; 7, BrunelSunergy (Holl) 1,463 5; 8, EF Education (Swe) 1,465.1; 9, Innovation Kvaerner (Nor) 1,466 4.

Flaming passion that brought the Games back to Greece

ROB HUGHES



meets a contender for woman of the year

The distance from London to Olympia is 1,500 miles. But each morning, as the three Angelopoulos children start their day, they can almost feel the pulse of Greece in their Chelsea home. They live off the King's Road in a regally appointed old rectory. On the first floor is the "Red Room", filled with memorabilia from the 1½ years that their mother, Gianna Angelopoulos, campaigned and won the fight to bring the Olympic flame "home" to Greece in 2004.

"As you can see, *it is next to* the breakfast hall," Angelopoulos said. "Passing through our Red Room is like starting the family's blood circulation. We have a life ahead of us, but these photographs reflect the most exciting period; campaigning for the Olympic Games is something in the Greek soul.

"I tell *my* children that anything you achieve comes through effort, through striving and ability — above all through creating human relationships. From April 1996 to September *1997, I practically* left my family behind, even my husband, Theodore, who is very possessive, because the campaign filled my life."

Angelopoulos, 42, mother, lawyer, partner in her husband's shipping and industrial company, gave up membership of the Greek parliament to lead the bid to *return the Games to Athens* for the first time since 1896. Her charm, her grasp of languages, of politics, power and emotion are surely, in this season of giving laurels, worthy of woman of the year.

In Lausanne, where the 107 members — most of them male — of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) voted, *Angelopoulos first demonstrated* that Athens, by pledging £2 billion to projects attacking its pollution and transportation horrors, had learnt the lesson of its rejection by the IOC in 1990.

She then made the IOC members feel they were improving the air that the next generation of Athenians will *breath, and challenged them* by saying that Athens was loyal to the Olympics and requested reciprocal loyalty.

It was a devastating appeal. She spoke, in French and English, with a fluency and a voice of controlled passion and her delivery shaded the emotion Nelson Mandela brought to Cape Town's bid, the *blatant politics Carlos Menem* wielded on behalf of Buenos Aires, the combined presence leading Olympic athletes gave to Stockholm and the combined weight of Luciano Pavarotti and Primo Nebiolo put behind Rome.

Angelopoulos dealt with them. Nebiolo, the godfather of international track and field athletics, had ignored sporting protocol by rubbishing Athens's organisation during the *world athletics championships* last summer. There came only the sound of silence from Angelopoulos and her 70-strong team. "From the first moment our Prime Minister asked me to lead the bid," she said, "I never was negative about the others.

"Greece had failed in 1990 because we were arrogant in our assumption that we had a right to renew the Olympic Games in the centenary year. We accepted what the movement were telling us, to improve the city drastically before we represented ourselves. Nobody dared to criticise. Our strategy *was to believe in ourselves,* always to be constructive to the members of the IOC — and Dr Nebiolo is a member."

There is notable defiance in her dark eyes. "Today? Now I have the privilege, *after* we got the Games, to say that Dr Nebiolo helped us, his criticism opened our *eyes.*"

Self-help, however, is also in Angelopoulos's vocabulary. As the Red Room walls show, she was honoured a month ago in Johannesburg by President Mandela, who not only bowed to the victor, but assisted in the process. In Lausanne, on the eve of the vote, Juan *Antonio Samaranch, president* of the IOC, had arranged a meeting between Mandela and Angelopoulos at which it was agreed that if either bid dropped out before the final round, they would persuade *their backers to support the* other. Ultimately, Athens defeated Rome 66-41, which included 14 of the votes previously cast for Cape Town.

She says she has retired from politics, although a recent opinion poll suggests that three-quarters of Greeks would vote for her as the next Prime Minister. "I don't think I will go back to that kind of politics. For me, the Olympic bid was an opportunity to do something for the whole of *my country, and winning it offers* something really unique for the younger people."

Angelopoulos celebrates Olympic victory in Lausanne with the mayor of Athens

'I was never negative about the other bids'

Indeed, her presentation centred on a 12-year-old child, Alexis, striving for athletic achievement in an Athens *suburb.* "The bid had to be powerful, and it had to be gentle. It had to be attractive, but it had not to be showy. I think, *through* Alexis, we have the dream."

The Angelopoulos boys, Panagiotis and Dimitris, have the privilege of private schooling at the Hellenic College of London; their sister, Carolina, competes on the playing fields of the American School of London because Theodore and Gianna Angelopoulos feel that London offers the best lifestyle and business base.

Yet, it was a family outing to Athens that galvanised Ange*lopoulos into action.* "We were there when the 1996 medal-winners came home," she said. "The people were so honoured, so *proud.* The whole of Athens waved laurels from the trees, and my sons, less than seven years old, said they want to be Olympic champions.

"I believe I am a winner, I *don't like to lose, but I try to* tell my children it is not only about victory — in real life there is a scale, a bottom line, a medium line and the very top."

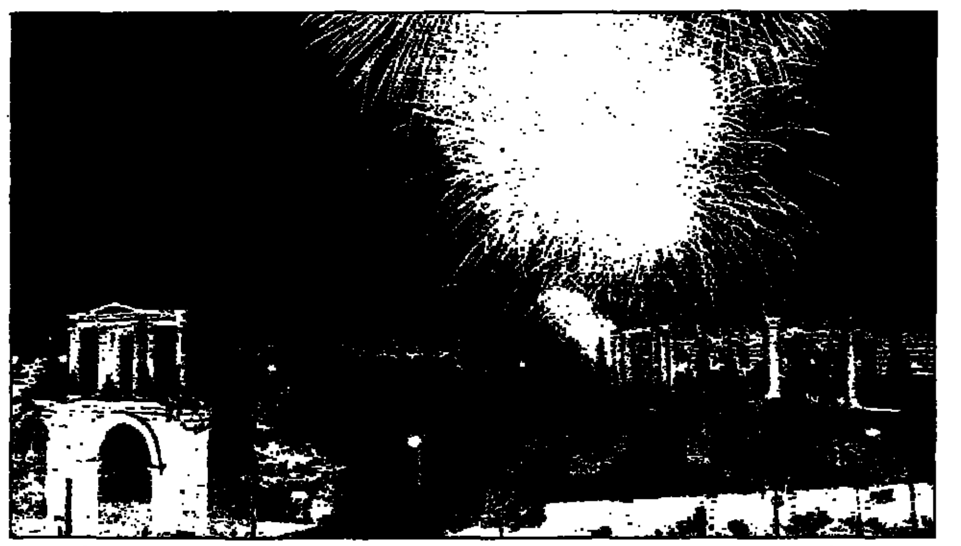
Raised on the island of Crete, Gianna and her younger sister both became lawyers. Their father, Frixos Daskalakis, made his own fortune through economics *and fruit trading, their mother* Marika, though educated, was content in motherhood.

"She is happy being a sweet grandmother," Angelopoulos said, "even if she is proud that I achieved at Harvard, after which I was a real performer in the penal court and parliament."

Angelopoulos believes in "catching the opportunities", and that this has less to do with womanhood than with human capability. "Its true, I was offered to lead the bid at the time Hillary Clinton was in Greece," she said, "but I am never the type to say women must have this or that percentage of representation. Life is effort, ability and you have to drive and you go after what you want to do. The Olympics? My God, I wanted to do it! I needed to do it! And I'm so very proud, so satisfied to have done it."

The final speech, the performance Angelopoulos calls it, was a *promise, implied but* unspoken, to restore Olympic ethics to a now gargantuan circus, sullied by the soulless commercialism of Atlanta. "I was propelled by an incredible responsibility," she said. "Wherever I went, people said: 'We trust you, Gianna, you can do it.' Today, even if I am alone in this house, I can feel *thousands of people with me,* their enthusiasm."

And will she now oversee the organisation of the Games, the acceleration of making Athens civilised again? "I completed my task," she said, "now I am full with half-finished jobs and responsibilities." It is not, she acknowledges, the answer her *people are waiting for and she* is not yet ready to say, publicly, if she can now leave the baby she delivered on September 5 for others to bring to maturity.



Fireworks over the Temple of Zeus mark the award of the Games to Athens

TELEVISION CHOICE

A savage winged predator

The Wildlife Specials: Eagle
BBC1, 8.00pm

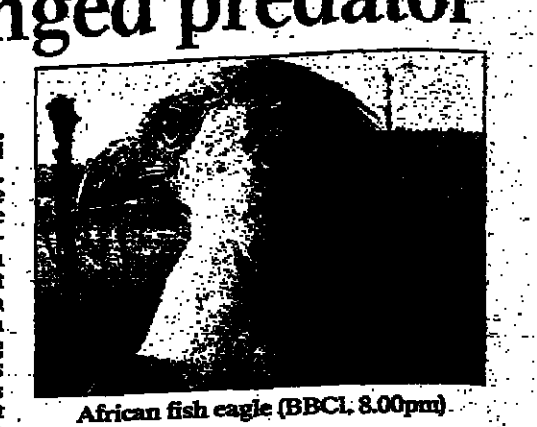
The eagle may, as Sir David Attenbrough tells us, be a majestic bird of prey noted for its strength and courage but as this splendidly shot film unravels, your sympathy lies more and more with the victims. Of course the eagle is an awesome creature and to follow the bird in full flight, as up-to-the-minute technology enables us to do, is an exhilarating experience. But it is good to see that little antelope get away from a savage predator in Africa and not nice to watch a golden eagle in Greece *cracking open a tortoise's shell by dropping* it on rocks from a great height. The film also tracks down eagles in Alaska, Japan and Australia but its rarest footage comes from the Philippines. That country is home to the world's tallest eagle and one of the heaviest but there are not many left and this *is the first footage of them living in the wild* for 20 years.

Gary Rhodes
BBC2, 8.00pm

Showing off his latest exotic wheels, which belong *to a Jaguar XK8, the manic cook heads for the West* Country. His quarry is the Brooks family who have forsaken London for the peace of rural Somerset and established the country's only organic herb farm. The plot is that the four Brooks children, aged two to 14, want to surprise Mum and Dad by cooking them a meal and have called in the culinary Bruce Forsyth to help. Tomato tarte tatin, seared scallops and clotted crème brulée make up the menu but, as always with Rhodes, style tends to triumph over content. If he has not been booked for a pantomime this Christmas he ought to have been. Rhodes also pops in to the hotel in Taunton where he made his name as a chef at the precocious age of 26.

Modern Times: Prommers
BBC2, 9.00pm

Getting pole position for the Promenade Concerts means lots of serious queueing and heaven help anybody who tries to buck the system. It used to get quite nasty until the Albert Hall put down a white tape to separate the true Prommers, who buy season tickets for the season, from those who turn up on the day and are contemptuously dismissed as trippers. *They even wear sandals and no socks,* tut tut. Helen Richards's delicious film is full of such nerdish snobbery, though there is something doggedly admirable about people prepared to camp round the clock to ensure their front row place for the Last Night. And better the Prommers *than* the corporate hospitality boxes where the evening is not about music (one company man admits to preferring Victoria Wood to Verdi) but entertaining clients.



African fish eagle (BBC1, 8.00pm)

Secret Lives: JFK
Channel 4, 9.00pm

Those who have followed the Kennedy revelation industry over the years will doubt whether much of his life is still secret, and so, despite the best efforts of this feature-length investigation, it proves. Not that it isn't hugely entertaining, in a prurient way, to hear once more about JFK's serial womanising and friends in the Mob, whose support may have swung enough votes to give him the presidency. If the film has anything new to offer it is in detail, not substance. Speaking for the first time, secret service men describe the President's sexual exploits and it emerges that a favourite Kennedy book was a life of Lord Melbourne, another statesman of high birth who liked the ladies. Kennedy's aides talk about living in fear that his indiscretions would be made public. The media would surely not be as discreet today.

Peter Waymark

RADIO CHOICE

Jazz Notes
Radio 3, 12.30am

I make a point of highlighting this programme a couple of times a year in the hope that Radio 3 will start putting it out at a time when most of its potential listeners are not in a club somewhere listening to jazz, but I hold out little hope: the network is more likely to move it to an even later spot and then close it down altogether on the ground that no one is listening. Oh well. To maintain the morbid tone I notice the programme has been honouring the dead of late: Ronnie Scott last week and tonight Fletcher Henderson, who died in 1952 aged only 55, having already written the rulebook of big band arranging. This is the first of a two-part tribute to Henderson and it concludes tomorrow.

Who Sings the Hero: Rosa Parks
Radio 4, 2.00pm

This is an absorbing series about women who found themselves in positions of extreme danger. Today's dramatisation is the story of Rosa Parks, a black seamstress living amid the entrenched racism of Alabama in the 1950s. On her way home from work one day, Parks was among the black women told to move out of the bus seats reserved for them because the seats for whites were full and more whites had got on the bus. Parks refused to move. The attention given to her arrest was to inspire Martin Luther King and it could be said that Rosa Parks launched the campaign that was to end segregation. Alibe Parsons plays Parks, Ray Shell is King and Clarke Peters is E.D. Nixon, the civil rights activist.

Peter Barnard

RADIO 1

6.30am Kevin Greening, Zoë Ball **9.00** Simon Mayo **12.00** Jo Whiley **2.00** *Mark Radcliffe* **4.00** *Dave Pearce* **6.15** *Newsbeat* **6.30** Session **8.30** Trade Update **8.40** John Peel **10.30** Mary Anne Hobbs **1.00am** Clive Warren **4.00** Chris Moyles

RADIO 2

6.00am Sarah Kennedy **7.30** Wake Up to Wogan **9.30** Ken Bruce **11.30** Jimmy Young **1.30pm** Debbie Thrower **3.00** Ed Stewart **5.05** John Dunn **7.00** Garth Brooks in Concert **8.00** Folk on 2 **9.00** The Mellotron **9.30** John Mortimer Presents Sensational British Trials **10.00** Auntie's Family Album **10.30** Richard Allinson **12.05am** Steve Madden **3.00** Alex Lester

RADIO 5 LIVE

6.00am Breakfast Programme **9.00** David Mellor **12.00** Midday **2.00pm** Ruscoe on Five **4.00** Nationwide **7.00** News Extra **7.30** Football Night **10.00** Littlejohn **11.00** News Extra **12.00** After Hours **2.00am** Up All Night **5.00** Morning Reports

VIRGIN RADIO

5.00am Jeremy Clark **7.00** Chris Evans **10.00 (FM)** Robin Banks **(AM)** Graham Dene **1.00pm (FM)** Nick Abbot **(MW)** Nicky Horne **4.00** Russ 'n' Jono **7.00 (FM)** Paul Coyte **(AM)** Calmin Jones **10.00** Mark Forrest **2.00am** Richard Porter

TALK RADIO

6.30am Paul Ross and Carol McGiffin **9.00** Scott Chisholm **12.00** Lorraine Kelly **2.00pm** Tommy Boyd **4.00** Peter Deeley **7.00** Anna Raeburn **9.00** James Whale **1.00am** Ian Collins

WORLD SERVICE

6.00am Newsday **6.30** Europe Today **7.00** News **7.15** Off the *Shelf: The Grass is Singing* **7.30** *Meridian Live* **8.00** *News* **8.10** Pause for Thought **8.15** Westway **8.30** Everywoman **9.00** News; News in German (648 only) **9.05** World Business Report **9.15** The Farming World **9.30** Science File **9.45** Sport **10.00** Newsdesk **10.30** One Planet **11.00** Newsdesk **11.30** Sports International **12.00** News **12.05pm** World Business Report **12.15** Britain Today **12.30** Wildtrack **12.45** Sport **1.00** *Newshour* **2.00** *News* **2.05** *Outlook* **2.30** *Megamix* **3.00** *News;* News in German (648 only) **3.05** Sport **3.15** Performance **3.30** Everywoman **4.00** News **4.15** From Our Own Correspondent **4.30** The World Today; News in German (648 only) **4.45** Britain Today **5.00** Europe Today **5.30** World Business Report **5.45** Sport **6.00** Newsdesk **6.30** The Works; News in German (648 only) **7.00** News **7.01** Outlook **7.25** Pause for Thought **7.30** *Multitrack X-Press* **8.00** *Newshour* **9.00** News **9.05** World Business Report **9.15** Britain Today **9.30** On Screen **10.00** Newsdesk **10.30** The World Today **10.45** Sport **11.00** News **11.05** Outlook **11.30** Multitrack X-Press **12.00** Newsdesk **12.30am** From Our Own Correspondent **12.45** Britain Today **1.00** Newsdesk **1.30** Omnibus **2.00** Newsday **2.30** Meridian Books **3.00** News **3.05** World Business Report **3.15** Sport **3.30** *Journey to the Centre of the Atom* **3.45** *Children in* Conversation **4.00** Newsdesk **4.30** Europe Today **5.00** Newsday **5.30** Europe Today

CLASSIC FM

6.00am Allan Mann **9.00** Henry Kelly **1.00pm** Listener Request Hour **2.00** Concerto. Richard Strauss (Horn Concerto No 2 in E flat) **3.00** Jamie Crick **6.30** Newsnight **7.00** Smooth Classics at Seven **8.00** Evening Concert. Tchaikovsky (String Quartet No 1 in D); Fauré (Requiem); Brahms (Symphony No 4) **10.00** Michael Mappin. Includes at 11.35 Nocturne **2.00am** Concerto (r) **3.00** Mark Griffiths

RADIO 3

6.00am On Air, with Stephanie Hughes, including Strauss (Waltz The Blue Danube); Mozart (Schnelle Füsse; Es Lebe Sarastro, Die Zauberflöte); Saint-Saëns (Tarantelle)
9.00 Morning Collection, with Peter Hobday. Shostakovich (Jazz Suite No 1); Butterworth (Loveliest of Trees, A Shropshire Lad)
10.00 Musical Encounters, with Mary Miller. Vivaldi (Viola d'Amore Concerto in A); McEwen (The Demon Lover); Lora Aborn (Make Me an Instrument of Thy Peace)
12.00 Composer of the Week: Prokofiev
1.00pm The Radio 3 Lunchtime Concert. Live from St Augustine's Church, Birmingham. The ensemble I Fagiolini performs Renaissance and early-Baroque Christmas music including pieces by Ludwig Senfl, Byrd and Lassus
2.00 Midweek Choice, with Susan Sharpe
4.00 Choral Evensong. Live from St Bride's Church, Fleet Street, London
5.00 In Tune, with Sean Rafferty
6.00 Rush Hour Concert: Voices at the Wigmore Hall. Iain Burnside presents vocal recitals
7.00 Cocktails. Includes recordings of Jack Jackson and his Orchestra at the Dorchester Hotel (r)
7.30 Performance on 3. Dmitri Sitkovetsky, violin, BBC National Orchestra of Wales under Mariss Jansons. Rossini (Overture William Tell); Brahms (Violin Concerto in D); Mendelssohn (Symphony No 3 in A minor, Scottish)
9.15 Postscript: Role Play. Michael Billington talks to Eleanor Bron and Juliet Stevenson (3/4) (r)
9.40 Benjamin Britten. Recordings made at the 1977 Aldeburgh Festival featuring the Northern Sinfonia conducted from the harpsichord by Steuart Bedford
10.00 Ensemble. Penny Gore introduces a recital by Lorraine McAslan, violin, and Nigel Clayton, piano. Suk (Four Pieces); Saint-Saëns (Violin Sonata No 1 in D minor)
10.45 Night Waves. Includes a report from the world premiere, in London, of Stephen Sondheim's first musical, *Saturday Night*
11.30 Composer of the Week: Goehr (r)
12.30am Jazz Notes. See Choice
1.00 Through the Night, with Donald Macleod

RADIO 4

5.55am (LW) Shipping Forecast 6.00 News Briefing **6.10** Farming Today **6.25** Prayer for the Day **6.30** Today **8.40** Yesterday in Parliament **8.58** Weather
9.00 News 9.05 Midweek, with the *Times* columnist Libby Purves and her guest Rosemary Verey
10.00 (FM) News; The Garden (2/4)
10.00 (LW) News; Daily Service
10.15 (LW) On this Day, with Geoffrey Wheeler
10.30 Woman's Hour. Introduced by Jenni Murray
11.30 Gardeners' Question Time (r)
12.00 News; You and Yours, with John Waite
12.25pm Ballylenon (3/4) **12.55** Weather
1.00 World at One, with Nick Clarke
1.40 The Archers (r) **1.55** Shipping Forecast
2.00 News; Who Sings the Hero: Rosa Parks. See Choice (3/3)
2.45 Treasure Islands, with Michael Rosen
3.00 News; The Afternoon Shift, with Daire Brehan
4.00 News 4.05 Kaleidoscope. Paul Gambaccini sees two films based on cartoon characters — *George of the Jungle and Prince Valiant*
4.45 Short Story: A Christmas Card to One and All, by Penelope Lively, read by Brigit Forsyth
5.00 PM 5.50 Shipping Forecast **5.55** Weather
6.00 Six O'Clock News 6.30 Wildbrain (r)
7.00 News 7.05 The Archers
7.20 Mysterious Ways. The *Times* columnist Libby Purves concludes her exploration into the legacy of a Christian *millennium (6/6)*
8.05 A Night with — Mary Coughlan (6/6)
8.30 Giants' Shoulders. The *Times* columnist Melvyn Bragg talks to Stephen Jay Gould, Daniel Dennett and Richard Dawkins about Charles Darwin (6/6)
9.00 Costing the Earth (5/8)
9.30 Kaleidoscope (r) **9.59** Weather
10.00 The World Tonight, with Robin Lustig
10.45 Book at Bedtime: Candide, by Voltaire (8/8)
11.00 (FM) The (Almost) Accidental Adventures of Bell and Todd. John Eggleston's comedy adventure starring June Whitfield (2/6)
11.15 TV Dinners, by Keith Lawes (2/6)
11.30 (LW) Today in Parliament
11.30 Harry Hill's Fruit Corner (r)
12.00 News 12.30am The Late Book: Coversations with My Agent. Written by Rob Long (3/5)
12.48 Shipping Forecast 1.00 As World Service

FREQUENCY GUIDE. RADIO 1. FM 97.6-99.8. **RADIO 2.** FM 88.0-90.2. **RADIO 3.** FM 90.2-92.4. **RADIO 4.** FM 92.4-94.6; LW 198; MW 720. **RADIO 5 LIVE.** MW 693, 909. **WORLD SERVICE.** *MW 648; LW 198* (12.45-5.55am). **CLASSIC FM.** FM 100-102. **VIRGIN RADIO.** FM 105.8; MW 1197, 1215. **TALK RADIO.** MW 1053, 1089. **Television and radio listings compiled by Peter Dear, Ian Hughes, Rosemary Smith, Susan Thomson, Jane Gregory and John McNamara.**

WORD-WATCHING

Answers from page 39

VAVASOUR

(b) A feudal tenant ranking immediately below a baron. Blackstone, 1766: "William the Conqueror directing a certain quantity be paid by earls, barons and vavasours respectively."

NEUTRINO

(a) Either of two stable leptons (associated with electron or meson), having zero mass and low probability of interaction with matter. Also the anti-particle of either of these, one of which is produced beside an electron and proton in B' decay of a neutron.

PENTHEMIMER

(b) In Classical verse, a group or catalytic colon of five half-feet, especially as constituting each half of a pentameter or the first part of a hexameter where the caesura occurs in the middle of the third foot. *Lorna Doone*, **R. D. Blackmore, 1869: "I had replied to Robin now with all the might and cadence of a penthemimal caesura."**

PEAU-DE-SOIE

(c) A rich, thick silk, with a dull satin face on both sides. The term is also applied to various inferior imitations. It is now used chiefly in the trade to designate the imitations called Rhadzimirs. *The Times*, **1958: "The bride wore a pearl-coloured peau-de-soie with a train."**

SOLUTION TO WINNING CHESS MOVE

1 ... Nf3+! 2 gxf3 Bxd4+ 3 cxd4 Qxb5 and Black wins.

Win bottled bliss

MAGIC numbers and free champagne: what more could possibly be desired by anyone with sporting blood in the veins? Once again, *The Times* is able to offer bottled bliss, in the form of Nicolas Feuillatte champagne, to anyone who contributes a Magic Number this Christmas.

A Magic Number is one that carries immense sporting weight and every year throws up new numbers.

How about 78, 0, and 0? These are the numbers for Michael Schumacher: the 78 points he was docked for crashing into Jacques Villeneuve, the zero points he was left with and the zero fine he was given for this potentially lethal assault. I will judge the numbers for *their* champagne-worthiness. Entries should be sent to me at:

The Sports Desk,
The Times,
1 Pennington Street,
London E1 9XN
or by fax to 0171 782 5211.

The final collection is to be published shortly after Christmas, so do it soon.

RUGBY LEAGUE

New drive for coaching post

THE Rugby Football League is to advertise for a Director of Coach Education to improve its coaching system. The Rugby League joint policy board is hoping to fill the new post by early March. The move follows a coaching review funded by the English Sports Council and involving 40 of the game's leading coaches.

Sir Rodney Walker, chairman of the joint policy board, said: "The coach education programme is fundamental to the board's vision, namely the realisation of the game's *potential as one of the leading* contact sports in Britain and Ireland."

GOLD MINING, DRILLING & EXTRACTING.
IN SOUTH AFRICA, A WOMAN'S WORK IS NEVER DONE.

GOLDEN GIRLS | SOUTH AFRICA'S FEMALE GOLD MINERS. TONIGHT AT 10 PM.

Discovery Channel
what's really happening

هكذا من الأصل

هكذا من الإهل

A nice little runner with two careful owners

REVIEW

Peter Barnard

Motor cars are the sitting tenant on every square inch of tarmac. Their nocturnal lairs are so elusive in London that estate agents drool over their up-and-over mechanisms and sell them at bedsit prices. Yet television was for many years strangely coy about transport's ultimate manifestation and even now the medium affords it only a single permanent ghetto.

That spot, *Top Gear* on BBC 2, has created a superstar motormouth in Jeremy Clarkson, the first television personality to speak in capital letters since the advent of Murray Walker. The strange propensity to utter the second half of a sentence as if it revealed the winner of the Booker Prize ("... and the double wishbone suspension is ... ABSO-LUTELY GORGEOUS") is a peculiarity of motoring television and has now spread from Clarkson to all his *Top Gear* colleagues.

Top Gear is a good programme but it does tend to be about cars, rather than their owners, and that is its weakness. As in the Premiership and the House of Commons, weaknesses are there to be exploited by the nimble of foot and mind. **Deals on Wheels** (Channel 4) does just that. Last night was the end of its present series but it will be back next year.

This programme is not about double wishbone suspension (please do not bandy that phrase on dealers' forecourts, I may have imagined it), except in the sense that such bits of gear could be susceptible to rot or rust. *Deals on Wheels* takes real people with real cars to sell, brings on a couple of experts to do a bit of *caveat emptor* on the bodywork and the engine and then films the actual sale.

There is a superficial touch of Del-boy and Rodney about Mike Brewer and Richard Sutton, the car-wise professionals who pull the cars apart and put a value on them, but Sutton is decidedly upmarket of Peckham and if you offered Brewer a Reliant Robin he would probably grow plants in it. These two know their motors, squire.

The three they knew last night were a Triumph Spitfire, value £4,000, sold for £3,900, a VW Beetle valued at and sold for £3,250 and a Ford Fiesta, asking price £2,600, sold for £2,500. The most interesting deal was the Fiesta, because it involved a woman selling to two other women. Unlike men, women who know nothing about cars tend to say so. They do not kick tyres (the sure sign of a man who knows nothing about cars), debate average mileages, fuel consumption or a tendency to roll in corners. In Clarkson-speak: If they like it ... THEY JUST BUY IT.

The mother and daughter who bought the Fiesta liked the look of it, found that it drove all right, did a bit of nominal haggling and that was that. Men buying from men is another matter. Rituals have to be gone through, although in the examples on offer at least one of the buyers was mesmerised by the cameras. He was not going to haggle on television. And the chap buying the Triumph had to admit that his present car was a Ford Orion, at which point he almost DIED OF EMBARRASSMENT.

There is an area of television programming that is about as far from second-hand car dealing as it is possible to get and this area is represented with some distinction by **Timewatch** (BBC 2). Last night's *In Search of Cleopatra* was a *sumptuous example of the* programme's diligence. I have given up trying to work out whether *Timewatch* is actually finding a new slant on established history; I just sit there and enjoy it. This was not an attempt either to reinforce or undermine Cleopatra's reputation for great beauty. The picture here was of a woman consumed with (and ultimately by) her love of Egypt and her determination to protect it from suitors.

Her affairs with Julius Caesar and Mark Antony were here portrayed as the sacrifice by Cleopatra of her own physical integrity in order to make accommodations which would protect the integrity of Egypt. But I suppose the most intriguing point, though again by no means a new one, is the possibility that Cleopatra was a black African. In the genealogy there is a question mark against Cleopatra's grandmother, so she could have been black, a *theory of special interest* among black American educators, as *Timewatch* demonstrated by attending a college class.

Cleopatra, Vanessa Feltz, Danny La Rue: as with a self-catering holiday bought at the last minute, you never know whom you are going to fetch up next to in this column. **Vanessa's Day With** (Channel 5) contained no revelations or insights about Danny La Rue because Feltz does not engage with people, she sort hangs around smiling at them. This is *Hello!* televised.

But La Rue is beyond being disliked. He is not only the best of the female impersonators; he is the most acceptable, because — as he said here — what he does is confined to the stage. He does not allow anyone to see him in the transitional stage and, most significantly, he does not parade under a different name on stage. His is a one-item agenda.

La Rue is nudging 70 and he has been in showbusiness for 50 years. He is doing pantomime again this year, in Southampton, where he also lives with a daft dog and memories. He took Feltz to the Roman Catholic church where he worships; the priest lets him have a key.

He may be a bit of a luvvie but when he says: "I haven't knowingly in 70 years hurt anybody, I love my work and I thank God for every day," you could roll your eyes, but you could also believe him. I believe him.

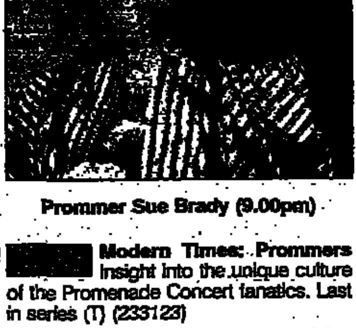
BBC1

6.00am Business Breakfast (15307)
7.00 BBC Breakfast News (T) (10765)
9.00 Good Living (1069678)
9.25 Style Challenge (1048185)
9.50 Kilroy (T) (2786475)
10.30 Can't Cook, Won't Cook (1556340)
10.55 The Really Useful Show (8555814)
11.35 Change That (3771765)
12.00 News (T) and weather (9295272)
12.05pm Call My Bluff (2406765)
12.35 Give Us A Clue (5179253)
1.00 News (T) and weather (80524)
1.30 Regional News (17248494)
1.40 The Weather Show (86142253)
1.45 Neighbours (T) (41586348)
2.10 Petrocelli (r) (1857098)
3.00 Vets in Practice (r) (T) (3475)
3.30 Playdays (7505562) **3.50** ChuckleVision (7592098) **4.10** Get Your Own Back (3127678) **4.35** Out of Tune (2494388) **5.00** Newsround (T) (6223773) **5.10** Blue Peter. The Advent Crown and a giant cracker (T) (6194611)
5.35 Neighbours (r) (T) (359901)
6.00 News (T) and weather (456)
6.30 Regional News (956)
7.00 Face Value The Spice Girls' own range of clothing; fashion on the ski slopes. Last in series (T) (5456)
7.30 Tomorrow's World How the shortage of church organs could be solved by a small box of electrical tricks; Santa Claus using the Internet (T) (920)
8.00 Eagle: A Wildlife Special David Attenborough introduces viewers to the beautiful but violent world of birds of prey, including the first film of Philippine eagles in the wild for 20 years (T) (202307)
8.45 The National Lottery Draw With Carol Smillie (731982)
9.00 News (T) Regional News and weather (5291)
9.30 Absolutely Fabulous: The Last Shout Edina returns from a near-death experience and becomes a different person; but will she fulfil a mother's duties as Saffy prepares for her wedding? With Jennifer Saunders, Joanna Lumley and Julia Sawalha (2/2) (r) (T) (516494)
10.14 National Lottery Update (152307)
10.15 The X Files: Kaddish Mulder and Scully investigate the death of a thug seemingly killed by legendary Jewish monster the Golem. David Duchovny and Gillian Anderson (856746)
11.00 Invasion of the Body Snatchers (1978) Donald Sutherland, Brooke Adams, Leonard Nimoy and Jeff Goldblum star in this remake of the classic sci-fi thriller about parasitic alien spores that land on Earth and produce replica human beings with no will of their own. Directed by Philip Kaufman (640901) **WALES: 11.00** Fighting Class: Profile of Pontypridd-born boxer Freddie Welsh (7036) **11.30** FILM: Invasion of the Body Snatchers (695611) **1.25am** Weather (9505437) **1.30** BBC News 24
12.55am Weather (8814944)
1.00 BBC News 24

VideoPlus+ and the Video PlusCodes
The numbers next to each TV programme listing are Video PlusCode™ numbers, which allow you to programme your video recorder instantly with a VideoPlus+™ handset. Tap in the Video PlusCode for the programme you wish to record. Videoplus+ (™), Pluscode (™) and Video Programmer are trademarks of Gemstar Development Ltd.

BBC2

6.00am Technology: Information Technology and Society (13949)
7.00 See Hear Breakfast News (r) (T) (3071562)
7.15 Teletubbies (r) (2268562) **7.40** Yakky Duck (r) (8628123) **8.05** It'll Never Work (r) (T) (6813340) **8.30** Model Millie (r) (8217765) **8.45** The Record (2541140) **9.10** The Fugitive (r) (T) (1628562) **10.00** Teletubbies (72017)
10.30 The Errand Boy (1961) Comedy written, directed by and starring Jerry Lewis (79452663)
12.05pm The Phil Silvers Show (3191185) **12.30** Working Lunch (r) (64901) **1.00** Noddy (r) (50343982) **1.10** Hammer it Home (73410369) **1.30** A River Somewhere: Fly-fishing on the River Altnaharra in Scotland (63272) **2.00** Take a Meal With: Bordeaux (r) (92592678) **2.15** Going, Going, Gone: special festive edition (45988123) *2.40 News* (T) (7651630) **2.45** Westminster: Prime Minister's Questions (T) (4654104) **3.55** News (T) (9677475)
4.00 Ready Steady Cook (949) **4.30** Through the Keyhole (2493659) **4.55** Esther: partners v pets (5872185) **5.30** Today's the Day (185)
6.00 Star Trek: The Next Generation (r) (T) (859814)
6.45 Sliders (253901)
7.30 A Date with an Artist Junior doctors collaborate with painter Julie Roberts; Jessica Voorsanger plans a tribute to *Blackpool FC. Last in series (T) (562)*
8.00 Gary Rhodes A meal for a family with an organic herb farm. Last in series (T) (2746)
8.30 Home Front A children's play area in Oxford's John Radcliffe Hospital. Redecorating a living room (T) (1253)

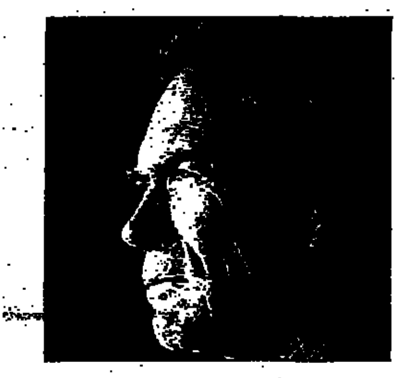


Prommer Sue Brady (9.00pm)

9.00 Modern Times: Prommers Insight into the unique culture of the Promenade Concert fanatics. Last in series (T) (233123)
9.50 Trouble at the Top An enterprising scheme to reverse the fortunes of Reliant Motors (r) (T) (767291) **WALES:** Picture This **10.20-10.30** X Philes
10.30 Newsnight (T) (604543)
11.15 Prison Weekly Comparing the British and Dutch prison systems. Last in series (897938)
11.45 A Woman Called Smith (r) (205611)
11.55 Weather (469982)
12.00 The Midnight Hour (52692)
12.30am Learning Zone: Eve Arnold (6459321) **12.45** 20th Century Women (6336586) **1.10** The Gentle Sex? (4406925) **1.35** Gender Matters: Women in the developing world (8011296) **2.00** Movie Making (96215) **4.00** Languages (72437) **5.00** Business and Training (90031)

HTV

6.00am GMTV (2554036)
9.25 Supermarket Sweep (1057833)
9.55 Regional News (7800475)
10.00 The Time, the Place (69543)
10.30 This Morning (T) (97392765)
12.20pm Regional News (T) (9209475)
12.30 News (T) and weather (5105678)
12.55 Shortland Street (T) (5180369) **1.25** Home and Away (T) (73419630) **1.50** Quisine (T) (38431479) **2.20** Countdown to Christmas (45963814) **2.50** Vanessa: I Had to Steal (T) (4810765)
3.20 News (T) (2818843)
3.25 Regional News (T) (3268384)
3.30 Tots TV (2932833) **3.40** The Singing Kettle News (8071475) **3.50** Old Bear Christmas Special (1589456) **4.20** Animaniacs (7538494) **4.40** Art Attack Christmas Cracker (7441320)
5.10 WALES: Primetime Diary (9174949)
5.10 World of Wonder (9174949)
5.40 News (T) and weather (532307)
6.00 Home and Away (r) (T) (524)
6.30 Regional News (104)
7.00 Emmerdale Jack and Sarah bury the hatchet for the day in order to go to Robert's play (T) (7104)
7.30 Coronation Street Judy faces an ultimatum from Zoe (T) (388)
8.00 Des O'Connor Tonight with the Spice Girls, Dame Edna Everage and the comedian Alistair McGowan (7765)



Clint Eastwood stars (9.00pm)

9.00 Unforgiven (1992) Starring and directed by Clint Eastwood. Western about a reformed murderer who reluctantly agrees to one more killing. Long settled into a peaceful life with his two children, he is coaxed out of retirement by a young gun who wants his help to collect a bounty. Also stars Gene Hackman and Morgan Freeman (T) **Continues after the News** (7901)
10.00 News (T) weather and Lottery Result (32814)
10.30 Regional News (T) (917271)
10.40 FILM: Unforgiven Conclusion of tonight's film (7696982)
12.05am Movie Show Special (5961963)
12.30 Collins and Maconie's Movie Club (3762692)
1.05 Real Stories of the Highway Patrol (r) (4862760)
1.25 The Night of the Generals (1967) with Omar Sharif, Tom Courtenay and Peter O'Toole. A Second World War whodunit in which a German intelligence officer attempts to identify the man responsible for a series of murders. Directed by Anatole Litvak (32727429)
3.55 Customs Classified (r) (4744654)
4.35 The Time, the Place (r) (79989012)
5.00 Coronation Street (r) (T) (80050)
5.30 News (57147)

CENTRAL

As HTV West except:
12.55pm-1.25 A Country Practice (5180369)
5.10-5.40 Shortland Street (9174949)
6.25-7.00 Central News (763678)
12.05am Film: Cactus Flower (136741)
2.05 Pavarotti in Modena 1996 (5361963)
3.00 Central Jobfinder '97 (77608925)
5.20 Asian Eye (4395673)

WESTCOUNTRY

As HTV West except:
12.20pm-12.30 Illuminations (9291456)
12.55 Home and Away (7299659)
1.20-1.50 Emmerdale (30084712)
5.10-5.40 Home and Away (9174949)
6.00-7.00 Westcountry Live (76746)
12.00am Short Story Cinema (56418)

MERIDIAN

As HTV West except:
1.50pm-2.20 The Fashion Police (38431479)
5.10-5.40 Home and Away (9174949)
6.00 Meridian Tonight (524)
6.30-7.00 Meridian Focus (104)
12.00am Weekly World News (56418)
5.00 Freescreen (80050)

ANGLIA

As HTV West except:
12.54 Anglia Air Watch (82383765)
12.55-1.25 What's My Line? (5180369)
5.10-5.40 Shortland Street (9174949)
6.23 Anglia Weather (253814)
6.25-7.00 Anglia News (763678)
10.29 Anglia Air Watch (401185)
12.00am Tales from the Darkside (56418)

S4C

Starts: 7.00 The Big Breakfast (67825)
9.00 Something So Right (42291)
9.30 *Film: You're My Everything* *(1949)*. A musical romance starring Anne Baxter and Dan Dailey (56962794)
11.05 Bless This House (8672272)
11.30 Powerhouse (9494)
12.00 Sesame Street (39727)
12.30pm Ricki Lake (66369)
1.00 Slot Meithrin (50352630)
1.15 Tic Toc (50357185)
1.30 Gardens Without Borders (17222456)
1.45 Film: Twelve Angry Men (1957, b/w). Classic jury drama starring Henry Fonda and Lee J. Cobb. Directed by Sidney Lumut (91419543)
3.30 Collectors' Lot (982)
4.00 Fifteen-to-One (807)
4.30 Pantoland (901)
5.00 5 Pump (9071104)
5.15 Ffeil (1931758)
5.30 Countdown (253)
6.00 Newyddion (749036)
6.10 Heno (864746)
7.00 Pobol y Cwm (464253)
7.25 Glaniad Y Ffrencod (400017)
8.00 Slope (7814)
8.30 Newyddion (6949)
9.00 Cracker *(5543)*
10.00 Brookside (910456)
10.35 Babylon 5 (197678)
11.30 Lloyds Bank Film Challenge (831920)
12.10am-4.30 Under the Moon (72529760)

CHANNEL 4

5.55am Sesame Street (54807)
7.00 The Big Breakfast (67825)
9.00 Something So Right (42291)
9.30 You're My Everything (1949) A romantic musical starring Anne Baxter and Dan Dailey set at the end of the silent movie era. Directed by Walter Lang (56962794)
11.05 Bless This House American comedy. Includes a guest appearance by Elaine Stritch (r) (8672272)
11.30 Powerhouse Political magazine (T) (9494) **12.00** Sesame Street (39727) **12.30pm** Light Lunch (r) (6134833) **1.35** Barbershop (b/w) A W.C. Fields short (51481794)
2.00 The Mouse on the Moon (1963) starring Margaret Rutherford, Ron Moody and Terry-Thomas. A satirical comedy about an impoverished Middle European state that sends a rocket fuelled by fermenting wine to the Moon. Richard Lester directs (T) (79746)
3.30 Collectors' Lot An Elvis collection and bagpipes (T) (982) **4.00** Fifteen-to-One (T) (807) **4.30** Countdown (T) (2488727) **4.55** Ricki Lake. Today's guests feel let down by the partners (T) (5867253) **5.30** Pet Rescue (T) (253)
6.00 Gamesmaster Computer games magazine presented by Dominik Diamond with Patrick Moore (5/10) (T) (494)
6.30 Roseanne The Connor household is thrown into turmoil with the arrival of an old biker friend of Dan's (r) (T) (746)
7.00 Channel 4 News (T) (408524)
7.50 Schubert Shorts Ciaron McFadden performs *Helden Rostein* (163272)
8.00 Brookside Why are Ron and David changing their image? Did Barry have something to do with Peter being mugged? What will Jacqui do without her cash? (T) (7814)
8.30 The Real Holiday Show The last in the series includes reports from Ottawa, Cannes and camping in the Loire Valley (T) (6949)

President John Kennedy (9.00pm)

9.00 Secret Lives: JFK The story of John Fitzgerald Kennedy's private life: his allegedly insatiable need for sex and amphetamines (T) (9630)
10.30 Beautiful Thing (1995) starring Glen Berry and Scott Neal. The story of under-age gay love that blossoms on a tough London council estate. Directed by Hettie Macdonald (T) (87422104)
12.10am Under the Moon Sports magazine presented by Danny Kelly and Tom Binns featuring American football highlights of the match between San Francisco and Denver (72529760)
4.30 Springhill Drama set on a Liverpool housing estate (2415147)
5.35 Schools: Geographical Eye (r) (T) (6092876)

CHANNEL 5

CHANNEL 5 ON SATELLITE
Channel 5 is now broadcasting on transponder No 63 on the Astra Satellite. Viewers with a **Videocrypt decoder** will be able to receive the channel free of charge. *Frequencies for transponder No 63 are* picture: **10.92075 GHz**; sound: **7.02** and **7.20 MHz**

6.00am 5 News Early (4252123)
7.30 Milkshake! (7532982) **7.35** Adventures of the Bush Patrol (r) (9124475) **8.00** Havakazoo (r) (9706889)
8.30 WideWorld: Fragile Planet How sea creatures adapted to underwater life (4/10) (4651730)
9.00 Espresso 10.00 Exclusive (r) (4451814) **10.30** Vanessa's Day With Danny La Rue (r) (T) (8121054)
11.00 Leeza Chat show hosted by Leeza Gibbons (3370036) **11.50** Double Espresso (90936307) **12.00** The Bold and the Beautiful (T) (6556366) **12.30pm** Family Affairs (r) (T) (1552272)
1.00 5 News Update (88894562) **1.05** Sunset Beach (T) (4145494) **2.00** 5's Company (3340272)
3.30 King of the Roaring Twenties — The Story of Arnold Rothstein (1961, b/w) starring David Janssen. The story of the rise and fall of a New York gambling supremo. With cameos from Mickey Rooney and Diana Dors. Directed by Joseph M. Newman (4223611)
5.30 Whittle Quiz game with audience participation (T) (4718036)
6.00 100 Per Cent Quiz game without a host (4715949)
6.30 Family Affairs The runaways, Charlotte and Liam, are taken in by a stranger (T) (4799901)
7.00 Exclusive Showbiz gossip (5167814)
7.30 Empire of the Elephant The birds and big game of Botswana's Okavango swamps (2/7) (T) (4795185)
8.00 Instant Gardens William Van Hage and the team continue to tackle a windswept Cornish coast garden (5176562)
8.30 5 News (T) (5162369)

Scarabelli and Pierpoint (9.00pm)

9.00 Alien Nation: Dark Horizon A sci-fi drama about an alien race whose existence on Earth is threatened by a racist human organisation. Eric Pierpoint, Michelle Scarabelli and Terri Treas (32583920)
10.50 The Jack Docherty Show Chat and comedy (1613562)
11.35 Prisoner: Cell Block H (2472659)
12.35am Live and Dangerous Includes American college football and basketball (46622586)
4.35 The Streets of San Francisco (T) (5887437)
5.30 100 Per Cent (r) (7044012)

SATELLITE AND CABLE

● For further listings see Saturday's *Vision*

SKY 1

6.00am Morning Glory (425185) **9.00** Hotel (85678) **10.00** Another World (44746) **11.00** Days of Our Lives (24982) **12.00** Oprah Winfrey (90340) **1.00pm** Geraldo (16388) **2.00** Sally Jessy Raphael (13388) **3.00** Jenny Jones (18814) **4.00** Oprah Winfrey (35949) **5.00** Star Trek: Voyager (2901) **6.00** Dream Team (8291) **6.30** Married ...with Children (8543) **7.00** The Simpsons (3630) **7.30** Real TV (5727) **8.00** Nightman (53017) **10.00** Ibiza Uncovered (38524) **11.00** Star Trek: Voyager (45475) **12.00** Late Show (31708) **1.00am** In the Heat of the Night (68925) **2.00** Long Play (6035166)

SKY BOX OFFICE

Sky's pay-per-view movie channels. To view any film telephone 0990 800888. Each film costs £2.99 per viewing

SKY BOX OFFICE 1 (Transponder 26)
The Glimmer Man (1996)
SKY BOX OFFICE 2 (Transponder 60)
Jingle All the Way (1996)
SKY BOX OFFICE 3 (Transponder 59)
The First Wives' Club (1996)
SKY BOX OFFICE 4 (Transponder 56)
The Long Kiss Goodnight (1996)

SKY MOVIES SCREEN 1

6.00am Desert Bloom (1986) (34120307) **7.40 Oh! What a Lovely War** (1969) (75715888) **10.00 Panic in the Skies** (1996) (38825) **11.30 When Time Ran Out** (1980) (24746) **1.30pm Desert Bloom** (1986) (88384) **3.30 Murder in Three Acts** (1986) (25475) **5.00 The Nativity** (1978) (67524) **7.00 Panic in the Skies** (1996) (41689) **9.00 Nine Months** (1995) (43456) **11.00 Suite 16** (1995) (622530) **12.50am First Light** (1992) (657079) **2.30 Never on Tuesday** (1988) (48963) **4.00 Immortal Beloved** (1994) (35429)

SKY MOVIES SCREEN 2

6.20am Unfaithfully Yours (1948) (57790901) **8.00 The Swan Princess** (1994) (35962) **10.00 Time Warrior: Trapped on Toy World** (1996) (13291) **12.00 The Walls of Jericho** (1948) (18833) **2.00pm The Bandit of Sherwood Forest** (1946) (50746) **4.00 Hart to Hart: Two Harts in 3/4 Time** (1995) (5475) **6.00** [illegible] (1995) (60369) **8.00 Outbreak** (1995) (42727) **10.00 Darkman III: Die, Darkman, Die** (1995) (835017) **11.40 Mute Witness** (1995) (433794) **1.20am Pontiac Moon** (1994) (138437) **3.10 Diana Kimbrey: Teenstar** (1996) (901944) **4.45 Aladdin and His Magic Lamp** (1965) (7052506)

SKY MOVIES GOLD

4.00pm Morning Glory (1933) (8747291) **6.00 The Ballad of Cable Hogue** (1970) (4986098) **8.00 Some Kind of Wonderful** (1987) (4981543) **10.00 The Fury** (1978) (8800814) **12.00 Lady in Cement** (1968) (7881876) **1.35am The Talk of the Town** (1942) (6264215) **3.35 Morning Glory** (1933) (55433012) **4.45** Close

TNT

9.00pm Treasure Island (1990) (90076123) **11.20 Billy the Kid** (1941) (85829745) **1.00am Eye of the Devil** (1967) (89441234) **2.35 Treasure Island** (1990) (38609166) **5.00** Close

SKY SPORTS 1

7.00am Sports Centre (87811) **7.30** Wrestling (19530) **8.30** Sports Centre (87901) **9.00** Racing News (78253) **9.30** Aerobics (14543) **10.00** The Footballers' Football Show (75630) **11.00** BMX (95494) **12.00** Aerobics (98017) **12.30pm** Big Fight Countdown (25859) **1.00** Pool (13814) **2.00** The Footballers' Football Show (51562) **3.00** Football (83494) **4.30** V-Max (7543) **5.00** Wrestling (6235) **6.00** Sports Centre (8936) **6.30** Big Fight Countdown (9388) **7.00** Pool (263272) **10.00** Sports Centre (99745) **10.30** Big Fight Countdown (99974) **11.00** Futbol Mundial (41524) **11.30** Sportraits (56017) **12.00** Sports Centre (47708) **12.30am** Pool (2176321) **2.30** Sports Centre (59316) **4.00** Close

SKY SPORTS 2

7.00 Aerobics (9602678) **7.30** Sports Centre (9681185) **8.00** Racing News (54137340) **8.30** Fish TV (7153054) **9.30** International Netball (2343727) **10.30** Pool (1642901) **11.30** Windsurfing (3310727) **12.30pm** FA Cup (3315272) **2.00** Cricket (4014340) **6.00** Rebel Sports (7419123) **7.00** Sports Centre (2008475) **7.30** Football: England U21 v Greece U21 — Live (4493889) **10.00** Sports USA (8609562) **11.30** Rebel Sports (4712475) **12.30am** Football (3093893) **2.30** Sports Centre (5971437) **3.00** Close

SKY SPORTS 3

12.00pm Wrestling (81344036) **1.00** Fish TV (81320456) **2.00** Superbouts (87622659) **3.00** The Road to Nagano (82011942) **3.30** Ice Wars (12712814) **5.00** Netball: England v New Zealand (19487794) **6.00** Pool (81333920) **7.00** Fish TV (18037253) **7.30** Cricket (50958727) **11.30** Close

EUROSPORT

7.30am Eurogoals (24582) **9.00** World Cup Dream Team (49479) **9.30** FIFA Federations Cup (20098) **11.00** Speedworld Magazine (80562) **12.00** Wheelies Magazine (83185) **12.30pm** Freestyle Skiing (10727) **1.00** Water Skiing (53122) **2.00** FIFA Federations Cup (46630) **3.00** Football: United Arab Emirates v Czech Republic — Live (75475) **5.00** Football: Uruguay v South Africa — Live (99838) **7.00** Tractor Pulling (95833) **8.00** Boxing: Lennox Lewis v Andrew Golota (71258) **9.00** Darts (91017) **10.00** Football (29036) **11.30** Motorcycling (66727) **12.30am** Close

UK GOLD

7.00am Bullseye (4339659) **7.35** Neighbours (4175524) **8.00** Crossroads (2280833) **8.25** EastEnders (6837098) **9.00** The Bill (6036456) **9.30** Howards' Way (9346098) **10.00** Bless This House (1414659) **10.30** The Sullivans (8025340) **11.00** Boon (8081746) **12.00** Crossroads (46118291) **12.25pm** Neighbours (46126678) **12.55** EastEnders (2057388) **1.30** Hi-De-Hi (4242307) **2.10** Yes Minister (6512949) **2.50** Last of the Summer Wine (9371340) **3.30** The Bill (3808104) **4.00** Juliet Bravo (38630901) **5.05** EastEnders (1194291) **5.40** Bob's Full House (4182765) **6.25** That's Showbusiness (5082320) **7.00** Last of the Summer Wine (9372869) **7.45** Don't Wait Up (8858456) **8.20** Yes Minister (8444807) **9.00** The Bill (1821259) **9.30** FILM: **Taggart the Movie: Rogue's Gallery** (8449291) **11.05** Live at Jongleurs (4238524) **11.40** Naked Video (9708582) **12.15am** Chancer (8039298) **1.05** Miami Vice (2501789) **2.05** Shopping (84618789)

GRANADA PLUS

6.00am The Box (8039814) **7.00** Coronation St (6453369) **7.30** Families (6465104) **8.00** Blind Date (8069123) **9.00** Within These Walls (4921494) **10.00** Donahue (6461388) **11.00** Hart to Hart (8441524) **12.00** Coronation St (8894746) **12.30pm** Families (2357901) **1.00** On the Buses (6445340) **1.30** Please Sir! (2356272) **2.00** The Good Guys (7960562) **3.00** Donahue (7194104) **4.00** Mission: Impossible (7173611) **5.00** Hawaii Five-O (3958017)

Goldie Hawn in *The First Wives Club* (Sky Box Office 3, from 8pm)

6.00 Families (7221678) **6.30** Coronation St (7205630) **7.00** Blind Date (9941475) **10.00** Hawaii Five O (8787122) **11.00** Close

CARLTON SELECT (cable)

5.00pm Gridlock (20732681) **5.30** Hey Dad II (28560543) **6.00** Blockbusters (28667456) **6.30** A Country Practice (28681036) **7.00** Get Back (84299775) **7.30** Switch On (28870920) **8.00** Rude Health (80037433) **8.30** The 10 Percenters (15887730) **9.00** FILM: **92 Grosvenor Street** (58695307) **11.00** St Elsewhere (84391630) **12.00** Movie Club (63738296) **12.30am** Tales of the Unexpected (54043012) **1.00** Close

DISNEY CHANNEL

6.00am Under the Umbrella Tree **6.30** Rosie and Jim **6.45** Winnie the Pooh **7.00** Aladdin **7.30** Tex Avery **8.00** Dinosaurs **8.30** Bonkers **9.00** Gummi Bears **9.30** Chip 'n' Dale **9.55** Small Stories **10.00** Sesame St **11.00** Winnie the Pooh **11.15** Rosie and Jim **11.35** Sing Me a Story **12.00** Tots TV **12.30pm** It's Fun to Learn with Spot **12.45** Winnie the Pooh **1.00** Sesame St **2.00** Amazing Animals **2.30** Gummi Bears **3.00** Tale Spin **3.30** Goof Troop **4.00** Timon and Pumbaa **4.30** Aladdin **5.00** Gargoyles **5.30** Dinosaurs **6.00** Blossom **6.30** Boy Meets World **7.00** Home Improvement **7.30** Wonder Years **8.00** FILM: **Mrs Santa Claus** **9.30** Dave's World **10.00** Close

FOX KIDS NETWORK

6.00am Delfy and His Friends **6.30** Billy the Cat **7.00** Pinocchio **7.30** Power Rangers Zeo **8.00** Beetleborgs **8.30** Masked Rider **9.00** Magic Box **9.30** Dudley the Dragon **10.00** Inspector Gadget **10.30** Samurai Pizza Cats **11.00** Sweet Valley High **12.00** Ace Ventura **12.30pm** Casper **1.00** The Tick **1.30** Iron Man **2.00** Fantastic Four **2.30** Power Rangers Zeo **3.00** Beetleborgs **3.30** Masked Rider **4.00** Ace Ventura **4.30** Casper **5.00** The Tick **5.30** X Men **6.00** Spiderman **6.30** Sweet Valley High

TCC

6.00am Happily Ever After **6.30** Bobby's World **7.00** Spirou **7.30** Dennis the Menace **8.00** Batman **8.30** Batman **9.00** Earthworm Jim **9.30** Romuald the Reindeer **9.45** Romuald the Reindeer **10.00** Oscar's Orchestra **10.30** Flash Gordon **11.00** Iznogoud **11.30** Gigantor **12.00** Spirou **12.30pm** Sonic **1.00** Batman **1.30** AJ's Time Travellers **2.00** Iznogoud **2.30** Flash Gordon **3.00** Sonic **3.30** Earthworm Jim **4.00** Dennis the Menace **4.30** Batman

CARTOON NETWORK

All your favourite cartoons broadcast from 5.00am to 9.00pm, seven days a week.

NICKELODEON

6.00am Killer Tomatoes **6.30** Aaahh! Real Monsters **7.00** Hey Arnold! **7.30** Rugrats **8.00** Doug **8.30** Neverending Story **9.00** CBBC **10.00** Wimzie's House **10.30** Babar **11.00** Magic School Bus **11.30** Bananas in Pyjamas **12.00** Paddington Bear etc **12.30pm** Little Red Tractor etc **1.00** Dr Seuss **1.30** Little Bear Stories **2.00** Animal Show **2.30** CBBC **3.30** Rocko/Doug **4.00** Angry Beavers **4.30** Rugrats **5.00** Sister Sister **5.30** Kenan and Kel **6.00** Sabrina the Teenage Witch **6.30** Moesha **7.00** Close

TROUBLE

12.00pm Swan's Crossing **12.30** Ready or Not **1.00** Madison **1.30** California Dreams **2.00** Saved by the Bell **2.30** Swan's Crossing **3.00** Blast **3.30** Ready or Not **4.00** Saved by the Bell **4.30** USA High **5.00** Hangtime **5.30** California Dreams **6.00** Blast **6.30** Madison **7.00** Hangtime **7.30** USA High **8.00** Close

CHALLENGE TV

5.00pm Cross Wits **5.30** Move on Up **6.00** Family Fortunes **6.30** Catchphrase **7.15** The $64,000 Question **8.00** Split Second **8.30** Karaoke Challenge **9.15** Winner Takes All **10.00** Treasure Hunt **11.15** Karaoke Challenge **12.00** Say the Word **12.30am** Hart to Hart **1.30** The Big Valley **2.30** Explorer **3.30** Alien's First Christmas **4.00** Jeux Sans Frontiers **5.00** Screenshop

BRAVO

8.00pm The A-Team (4878611) **9.00** Tour of Duty (4898475) **10.00** Red Shoe Diaries (5980920) **10.45** FILM: **Superstition** (1982) (71643974) **12.35am** Leslie Nielsen's Unbalanced World (1174215) **12.45** Tour of Duty (1291857) **1.45** Red Shoe Diaries (5390789) **2.30** FILM: **Truck Turner** (1974) (1192418) **4.20** Leslie Nielsen's Unbalanced World (85823012) **4.30** Family Dog (8889447) **5.00** Starsky and Hutch (4402789)

PARAMOUNT COMEDY

7.00pm Grace Under Fire (9456) **7.30** Roseanne (6814) **8.00** Ellen (8104) **8.30** Cybill (7611) **9.00** Cheers (77949) **9.30** Taxi (36785) **10.00** Frasier (97388) **10.30** The Kenny Everett Show (99956) **11.00** Gayle's World (72494) **11.30** Ellen (54659) **12.00** Roseanne (38050) **12.30am** Nightstand (99673) **1.00** Soap (55499) **1.30** Taxi (94876) **2.00** Gayle's World (32079) **2.30** Grace Under Fire (11586) **3.00** Frasier (68963) **3.30** The Kenny Everett Show (35166) **4.00** Close

THE SCI-FI CHANNEL

8.00pm Sightings (3900630) **9.00** FILM: **America 3000** (1986) (12400727) **10.45** The Making of the Rides: Terminator 2 — 3D (2889730) **11.00** Friday the 13th (6212475) **12.00** Sightings (6934924) **1.00am** The Twilight Zone (9590437) **1.30** Tales of the Unexpected (3302147) **2.00** Dark Shadows (7424418) **2.30** New Alfred Hitchcock (7403925) **3.00** Friday the 13th (9202857) **4.00** Close

HOME & LEISURE

9.00am The Joy of Painting **9.30** Garden Club **10.00** Garden Party **10.30** New Yankee Workshop **11.00** Andy's Angling Adventures **11.30** Hometime **12.00** The Diceman **12.30pm** Hammer it Home **1.00** Yan Can Cook **1.30** The Restoration Game **2.00** Furniture on the Mend **2.30** Antiques Trail **3.00** Two's Country **3.30** Home Again

DISCOVERY

4.00pm Bush Tucker Man (3885253) **4.30** Flightline (3814765) **5.00** Ancient Warriors (8032123) **5.30** Beyond 2000 (3805017) **6.00** Eye of the Serpent (8356475) **7.00** Mysterious Universe (8029659) **7.30** Disaster (3815494) **8.00** Mysterious Universe (8038307) **8.30** Mysterious Universe (8017814) **9.00** Arthur C Clarke: The Visionary (4801949) **10.00** Golden Girls (8048291) **10.30** Zulu Messengers (8024611) **11.00** Extreme Machines (8040253) **12.00** The Diceman (7287499) **12.30am** Wheel Nuts (7898079) **1.00** Disaster (9439186) **1.30** Beyond 2000 (9873383) **2.00** Close

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC

7.00 On Heavenly Wings (8774765) **8.00** New Chimpanzees (8750185) **9.00** Across the Jungle Divide (9897765) **9.30** John Harrison: Explorer (3694494) **10.00** Invaders in Paradise (8773036) **11.00** Legacy of LSB Leakey (5087456) **12.00** Little Warriors (2625234) **1.00am** Close

TRAVEL (cable)

12.00pm Going Places **1.00** Dominika's Planet **1.30** Beyond Borders **2.00** Snow Safari **2.30** No Truckin' Holiday **3.00** Reel World **3.30** Oceania **4.00** Australian Gourmet Tour **4.30** On the Road to the Islands **5.00** Ridge Riders **5.30** Railway Adventures Across Europe **6.00** Stepping the World **6.30** On Tour **7.00** Great Splendours of the World **8.00** North of Naples, South of Rome **8.30** Portrait of Ireland **9.00** Holiday International **10.00** No Truckin' Holiday **10.30** A Fork in the Road **11.00** Cities of the World **11.30** Reel World **12.00** Close

THE HISTORY CHANNEL

4.00pm Hitler's War Machine (1121974) **5.00** Lost Civilisations: China (2007746) **6.00** Ancient Mysteries (7419123) **7.00** Biography: Capone (2572611) **8.00** Close

CARLTON FOOD (cable)

12.00pm Food Network Daily **12.30** The Restaurant Show **1.00** Food for Thought **1.30** Twelve Chefs of Christmas **2.00** Christmas at Ballymaloe **2.30** Food Network Daily **3.00** Alive and Cooking **3.30** Graham Kerr's Kitchen **4.00** Aldo's Italian Job **4.30** Chef for a Day **5.00** Close

LIVING

6.00am Tiny Living **9.00** Why Me? **9.30** The Gordon Elliott Show **10.10** Jerry Springer **11.00** The Young and the Restless **11.55** Brookside **12.25pm** Jimmy's **1.00** Cheap Chic **1.30** Ready, Steady, Cook **2.05** Hart to Hart **3.00** Live at Three **4.10** Jerry Springer **5.00** Rolonda **5.50** Cheap Chic **6.20** Ready, Steady, Cook **7.00** Rescue 911 **7.30** Mysteries, Magic and Miracles **8.00** Adrenalin Junkies **9.00** FILM: **Web of Deceit** **10.55** Sex Life **11.30** More Sex Life

ZEE TV

6.30am Phire Alam **7.00** Jaagran **7.30** Ghoomta Aaina **8.00** Business **8.15** Music **8.30** Raahat **9.00** Manabi **9.30** Out and About **10.00** Tara **11.00** Low Cal **11.30** Hum Aap Ke Hain Woh **12.00** Daraar **12.30pm** Hit Thi Hit Hai **1.00** FILM **4.00** Public Demand **5.00** Aisa Bhi Hota Hai **5.30** Teen Do Paanch **6.00** Hum Paanch **6.30** All Time Hits **7.00** Liberty **7.30** Banegi Apni Baat **8.00** News **8.30** Dastaan **9.00** Pal Do Pal **10.00** Film Baazar **10.30** Top 10 **11.00** Purush Kshetra **12.00** Close

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Chairman prepares to sell shares

Lee ready to step down in City takeover

By David Maddock

FRANCIS LEE, the chairman of Manchester City, has indicated that he will consider selling his stake in the club, a move that would open the way for a takeover. Rumour has been rife recently that the Nationwide League first division club is the target for a City takeover, and that was confirmed this week when representatives of a merchant bank, believed to be Schroders, visited Maine Road to make a formal valuation.

They suggested that the market price is somewhere between £30-£35 million with shares trading at £1.20. The club's directors have been advised that any takeover attempt would need to value the shares at £1.50, giving a price of £45 million.

Lee has become increasingly frustrated at Maine Road. Although he is the chairman, he has a holding of around 13 per cent, which means that he can be outvoted by other key shareholders, including Stephen Boler, JD Sports, the leisurewear manufacturers, and Greenall Whitley, the brewing company., should they join forces. JD Sports, in particular, has voiced opposition to Lee's regime. The company, headed by David Makin and John Wardle, has around a 5 per cent stake in City and has demanded a representative on the board and sweeping changes.

That has already seen some of Lee's closest allies step down from the board of directors. David Holt and Colin Barlow, the former managing director, have departed, and John Dunkerley, another director, is likely to follow suit. Dennis Tueart, the former City player, is joining the board to represent JD Sports' interests.

Hudson fights for life .. 38
Smith's troubles 38
Atkinson buys 38

Lee flew to the Caribbean for a family holiday at the weekend but, before he left, he indicated that he is ready to sell his stake, for which he paid £6 million when he took over from Peter Swales, the previous chairman, in 1994. A club director confirmed yesterday that there was interest from a number of sources and suggested that a formal takeover bid could be announced within a matter of weeks.

Lee: minority shareholding

Mike McDonald, the chairman of Sheffield United, is one name being linked with City. He attempted to buy the club from Swales before Lee was successful in his acrimonious attempt to oust Swales. McDonald has retained a desire to buy into City and is holding talks with Makin and Wardle to buy their stake.

A merchant bank has been linked with a possible takeover, as a front for venture capitalists, who see City as ripe for a takeover. Even though the club is valued at around £35 million, there is the potential to expand in the short to medium term. Within the next few weeks, the club is expected to announce plans to become tenants at the stadium which is being built for the Commonwealth Games in Manchester in 2002. The stadium will hold 50,000 spectators and provide state-of-the-art facilities.

Since Lee took over, City have slumped from the FA Carling Premiership to just above the relegation zone of the first division. He has appointed three managers in three years and has failed to provide the funds to mount a sustained attempt to return to the top flight.

Lee's stake provides only a minority interest in City, but Boler is also thought to be ready to sell his stake, which stands at around 28 per cent. Combined with Lee's holding, it would offer a majority shareholding.

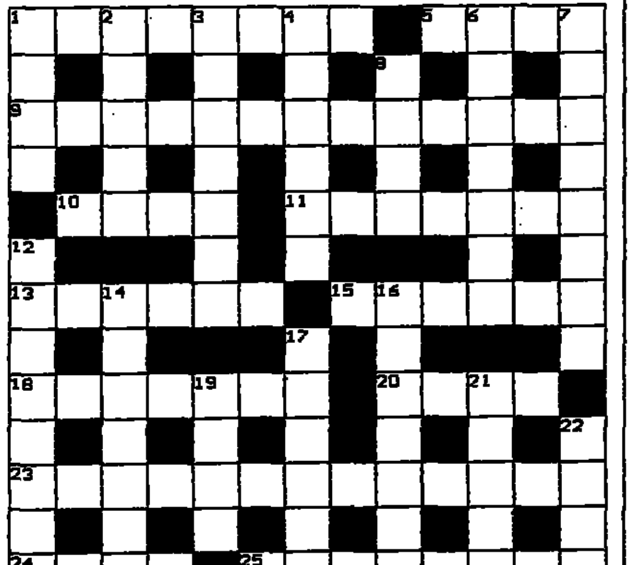
Boler, who is among the top 100 richest men in Britain, is based in South Africa and is not involved in the day-to-day running of the club, despite suggestions that he would provide the finance to buy players when he bought his stake in the club a year ago.

Away from the boardroom at Maine Road yesterday, it appeared that Uwe Rösler, the German striker, is set to leave the club, with Everton and Sunderland expressing an interest. Rösler's contract expires this summer when we will become a free agent, and City have decided that they should get a fee for him now.

There are also suggestions that Frank Clark, the manager, is finally prepared to listen to offers for Georgi Kinkladze, the Georgia midfield player, with Everton again being suggested as a possible buyer.

Across the city, Manchester United have received a £1 million offer for Jordi Cruyff, the Holland forward, from Deportivo La Coruña, the Spanish club. Cruyff has failed to make an impact since arriving at Old Traford from Barcelona a year and a half ago, and it seems as though the deal could go through quickly.

TIMES TWO CROSSWORD



No 1279

ACROSS

1 Fit closely; *violated* (*anag.*) (8)
5 Exchange (4)
9 Make sense as part of whole (4.4.5)
10 Sharp pain, emotion (4)
11 Assyrian capital, Jonah destination (7)
13 Sheen; glory (6)
15 Title of German emperor (esp Bill) (6)
18 Pablo —, Cubist artist (7)
20 Composed: not too hot (4)
23 Fairground slide; fast and careless (6-7)
24 Scots dagger (4)
25 Principles of judgment (8)

DOWN

1 Stupid (as a brush) (4)
2 Russian river, *Boatmen* song (5)
3 *Firing device* (7)
4 Chant; pronounce solemnly (6)
6 Quays (7)
7 Overabundance (8)
8 Full width; stretch across (4)
12 Slovenly, negligent (8)
14 Of this world (not the next) (7)
16 *Very old* (7)
17 Working cat (6)
19 Killed; swing heavily round (4)
21 River mammal, eg Tarka (5)
22 Opera solo (4)

SOLUTION TO NO 1278

ACROSS: 1 Eisteddfod 8 Popular 9 Chain 10 Role 11 Uncouple 13 Bucket 15 Quango 17 Ridgeway 18 Lore 21 Evict 22 Quicken 23 Hall of Fame

DOWN: 2 Impel 3 Tile 4 Daring 5 Factotum 6 Deadpan 7 Anne Boleyn 8 Pork barrel 12 Pedestal 14 Caddish 16 Banquo 19 Oakum 20 Jiff

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THE NEW BOYS LOOKING TO CATCH HODDLE'S EYE

Heskey, Duberry, Ferdinand and Owen are among the under-21 players hoping to impress Hoddle and press their World Cup claims

Hoddle keen on youth movement

Matt Dickinson looks at some of the young pretenders with ambitions to press their claims for a place in England's plans

ONE of Glenn Hoddle's favourite phrases is "the door to the World Cup is wide open". His presence at Carrow Road tonight should provide ample reassurance to the players of the England Under 21 team that he has no intention of slamming it shut just yet.

Certainly not on the likes of Michael Owen and Rio Ferdinand, two of the country's most precocious teenagers, whose hopes of travelling to France in the summer, the stuff of their own schoolboy dreams not so many months ago, are now discussed freely and realistically by the England coach.

"This is a chance for some of these young players, like Owen and Ferdinand, to really hit me in the eye," Hoddle said yesterday. "It has nothing to do with whether you are young or old, that has always been my philosophy.

"One part of the job tonight is for the under 21 team to try and get further. Another is with the World Cup in mind. There are no guarantees for anyone in the senior squad. We have to get that final 22 absolutely spot on and we will be watching a lot of kids over the next few months."

So while the setting may be Norwich City's ground tonight, it is against a backdrop of the World Cup finals that Owen will make his under-21 debut and Ferdinand will try to strengthen his claim as the sort of assured defender that Hoddle is seeking.

Overturning a 2-0 first leg deficit and qualifying for the last eight of the European championship is the superficial target against Greece, but it is the bigger picture that fascinates, the progression of English teenage talent under a coach who is not afraid to put his faith in youth.

It is easy to forget that it was not always so. Far from being a stepping stone to senior level, the under-21 side was once a twilight zone where the likes of Gary Owen, the former Manchester City and West Bromwich Albion midfield player, could amass 22 caps over a six-year period and then disappear altogether from the England reckoning.

Now the best young players find themselves invited to train with the senior squad, a privilege already bestowed on Owen. The Liverpool striker celebrated his eighteenth birthday on Sunday, but no one doubts that he will take the next step up in his remarkable ascent of the footballing ladder towards becoming a finisher of Alan Shearer's class.

That may take some years yet, but Owen is leaving little to chance, employing the same agent, boot sponsor and deadpan interview style of the injured England captain.

He has learnt, though, this season that his youth is no protection from the behemoths that inhabit defences in the FA Carling Premiership, and at Highbury recently he was mercilessly battered by Tony Adams.

It is punishment he has responded to largely by scoring more and more goals, but his retaliation took on a more sinister edge earlier this season when he was sent off playing for England Under-18s against Yugoslavia, his patience snapping as he received no protection against constant kicking and holding.

His uncharacteristic rashness cost him an appearance in the first leg of this tie, when England struggled badly on a poor pitch, but Owen claims to be older and wiser.

"It was an unfortunate thing that happened," he said. "I didn't think I deserved to go but it was still a stupid thing to do. I think any player can lose their cool under pressure and get frustrated when you are being dragged back and kicked the referee is not doing anything about it.

"You have got to learn to put up with it. Perhaps when defenders see you are small they think I will not be able to handle it but I am not going to just lie down."

In defence, Ferdinand, already capped at senior level when he made a typically mature appearance as substitute against Cameroon last month, is likely to be partnered in defence by Michael Duberry, of Chelsea, recently restored to fitness and now pushing for senior recognition.

"It is just like a club set-up," Peter Taylor, coach of the under-21 said, said. "These lads are in the reserves trying to get into the first team and they know they have a chance. Obviously getting into a World Cup squad is not easy for any player but they have that incentive."

Taylor discovered yesterday that success will mean a stern test of his squad's maturity in the quarter-finals. The draw paired them with Germany.

ENGLAND UNDER-21 (3-5-2: probable): R Wright (Ipswich) — M Duberry (Chelsea), R Ferdinand (West Ham United), R Scimeca (Aston Villa) — M Hall (Coventry City), F Lampard (West Ham United), J Carragher (Liverpool), S Hughes (Arsenal), D Granville (Chelsea) — M Owen (Liverpool), E Heskey (Leicester City).

Scottish clubs set their terms for breakaway

SCOTLAND'S leading ten clubs, who are intent on establishing their own premiership next season, were last night told by the Scottish League first division teams that they will demand an immediate premiership of 12 clubs from next season before they give their blessing to the breakaway.

They are also understood to be seeking compensation of a minimum £2.5 million each year for the next 20 years to be paid to the Scottish League.

The first division clubs will now present the package to their colleagues in the second and third divisions before embarking on talks with the premier division clubs.

Partick Thistle, the Glasgow club that is bottom of the first division and has debts of £2 million, was yesterday given a two-month stay of execution by its creditors.

Warne's humour wearing thin

By Simon Wilde

ENGLAND'S cricketers have been trying for four years to find a way of rattling Shane Warne — but the answer may now be at hand. Far from being infallible, as many suspected, the demon Australia leg spinner has two weak spots, it seems. One is a fondness for food; the other, an unwillingness to discuss his waistline.

The second led to Warne being bowled, very publicly, neck and crop yesterday in a Melbourne eaterie he part-owns. The world's most easily recognisable cricketer had been prompted to host a press conference (one thing for which he unquestionably has only a modest appetite) in order to unveil his waxwork double for Madame Tussaud's. It was a move that was to choke on itself.

Having told the gathered media to feel free to ask questions, Warne was asked if he preferred the shape of the wax image, which appeared to resemble a Warne who had spent several weeks on the Lawson diet (Nigel, not Geoff). Clearly irritated, Warne snapped: "That's why I don't answer any questions from you blokes. That's it, you've ruined it ... thanks very much." And with that, Warne stalked out of the room.

Familiar with performing in the field for hours on end and usually cool under pressure with a ball in his hand, he had left the podium after just one minute. It was a hit, a palpable hit.

In fact, Warne's midriff bulge has become a matter of concern not only to himself since he returned from a tour of England three months ago. Only last week, Geoff Marsh, the Australia coach, asked him to start monitoring his diet. With the festive season approaching, this is a stern challenge.

As Australia's most consistent matchwinner, Warne has long been a target for gibes from opposing supporters not slow to feed the "fat boy" image — not least in England last summer. But for any sportsman with a tendency to tubbiness, this sort of thing goes with the territory, as fellow cricketers "Fat Gatt" (Mike Gatting), "Tubs" (Mark Taylor) and "Sumo" (Merv Hughes, a big friend of Warne's) would all confirm.

Double helping: Warne poses with his waxwork dummy

By and large they have ridden the jokes, from the who-ate-all-the-pie chants to the towels-up-shirts impersonations, with good humour, including Warne himself — until now. The turning point may have been a recent incident in a one-day match in Sydney when his old foe, Darryl Cullinan, of South Africa, sent him packing to the pavilion with the words: "Go and deflate yourself, you balloon."

Warne, 28, has an unusual physique. He possesses massively powerful shoulders, forearms and hands and relatively spindly lower legs — the result of an accident as a child in which he broke both legs. While recuperating, he pushed himself around in a small cart with his hands. When he was trying to establish himself as a cricketer, Warne had a liking for junk food and it was only when he returned for a second spell to the Australian Cricket Academy after a dismal first Test appearance that he tackled his youthful weight problem in earnest.

Unless he can take drastic remedial action, Warne may come to regret his decision to turn down lucrative offers to play county cricket in England next year in favour of spending time with his young family. Five months of home cooking sounds like the last thing he needs.

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